THE GREAT FOOTBALL SCANDAL
I NEVER WANT TO PLAY FOR ENGLAND AGAIN'
Shack" The Rebel Hits Out At
SHACK, THIS IS CLEVER . . .
EMPIRE NEWS
SOLD OUT!
SHACKLETON
'Shack' Was Right
Not About Refs !

ALSO BY LEN SHACKLETON

Clown Prince of Soccer

Above is a photograph of a selection of the press cuttings received for Shackleton's exciting autobiography, which is also published by Kaye. It is a wickedly stimulating book, characteristic of this soccer genius.

35 *photos, cartoons,* 10/6

SHACK'S GUIDE TO SOCCER *by* LEN SHACKLETON

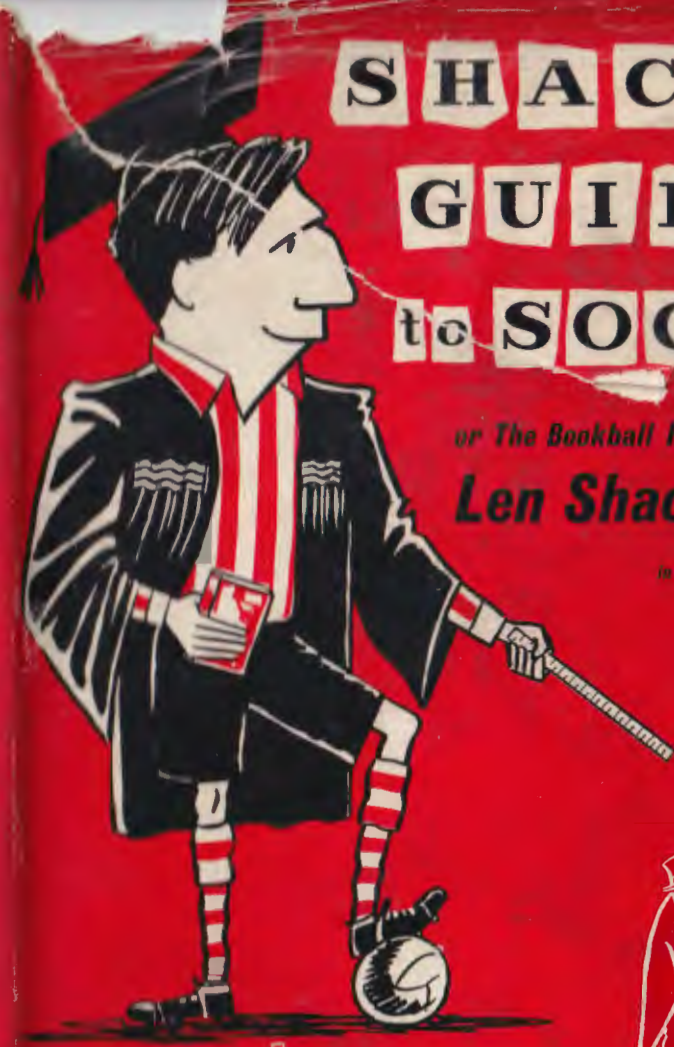
NICHOLAS KAYE

SHACK'S GUIDE to SOCCER

or The Bookball Handfoot by

Len Shackleton

in collaboration with DAVID JACK



ABOUT BOARD MEETINGS

ABOUT FOOTBALL POOLS

ABOUT F.A. COACHES

Len Shackleton's first book, *Clown Prince of Soccer*, caused a sensation. *Shack's Guide to Soccer* will perhaps have just as great an impact though the famous footballer uses a new approach this time—that of humour.

This is essentially soccer satire. Len Shackleton has taken a look at football as he would at a circus and, not surprisingly, most of the characters in the book are clowns. Still, who better than the ' Clown Prince of Soccer ' to produce odd characters ? And ridiculous though they may appear, perhaps they are not so far removed from some real persons of the 1956-57 football fraternity.

' Shack ' traces the origins of soccer right back to the days of the Druids XI which played at Stonehenge . . . the team which qualified for the ' Woaden Spoon ' in its first season. He writes about that memorable first continental soccer invasion, when Harold King's side was beaten in the match at Hastings in 1066 : he pokes fun at clubs, players, directors, critics, and even professional footballers who write books !

Perhaps, however, the author is at his best when he looks into the future—when he describes the game as he imagines it will be 10 years hence. In his chapters, ' Football League Meeting 1966 ' and ' F.A. Continental Tour 1966 ', Len Shackleton foresees a chaotic state of affairs, and spares nobody's feelings as he tears soccer to shreds by his ridicule.

(*Continued on rear flap*)

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY
MICKEY DURLING

8*s*. 6*d*.
NET

One or two critics of Mr Shackleton's first book imagined the author as a player with a grudge, a man with a chip on his shoulder. In *Shack's Guide to Soccer* he does not condemn football : instead he laughs at it. Here is a rib-tickling—deliciously lunatic—parody of soccer to delight every follower of the great game. And only if the cap fits very well, ' Shack ' says, should the reader feel he must wear it.

SHACK'S GUIDE TO SOCCER

Also by Len Shackleton

CLOWN PRINCE OF SOCCER

'What an easy way to earn £15 a week'

Shack's
GUIDE TO SOCCER

by ***LEN SHACKLETON***

in collaboration with DAVID R. JACK

with 22 photographs
and cartoons by ***MICKEY DURLING***

LONDON 1956
NICHOLAS KAYE

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AUTHOR'S NOTES

Pound, 10 shillings, dollar, yen, kroner.

All characters in this book are either living, dead, or American, and bear no resemblance whatever to fictitious people. The book was translated from the original Arabic by an anonymous bilinguist from Boldon.

I am indebted to Mr. G. B. Stocks of Glasgow whose original idea caused this book to be written. Whether readers will also be indebted to Mr Stocks by the time they have read it remains a matter for conjecture.

Dedicated to

BOB WHITTINGHAM

Secretary of the Kenya S.A.

in appreciation of his kindness to

my family and myself on our recent visit

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The majority of the photographs used to illustrate this book have been supplied by Kemsley Newspapers Limited, to whom the author wishes to tender his thanks. The photograph of the Doncaster Rovers' training session has been supplied by P. A. Reuter, to whom thanks are also given.

ILLUSTRATIONS

BETWEEN PAGES 64 AND 65

1. Muck Park, famous ground of Gloggleton United FC before the start of the mammoth ground improvement scheme.
2. Muck Park again . . . after the completion of the mammoth ground improvement scheme.
3. This is the FA Cup in all its glory . . . as the Football Association like to see it.
4. This is the FA Cup being used for some other purpose by Master Roger Shackleton. The author believes the Football Association will not like to see it being used for this other purpose.
5. In the ultra-modern Football Association workshops, vast quantities of equipment are available for FA coaches.
6. If soccer spectators feel they have not been given value for money, they sometimes reveal their disappointment quietly to the management.
7. Is this the average soccer spectator? No! it is not!
8. Footballers are given the best of everything, including speedy, comfortable, first-class travelling facilities for away matches. This type of vehicle transports such teams as Gloggleton United quickly and comfortably.
9. Before important Cup-ties, players are taken to holiday resorts where they enjoy a quiet rest away from all normal domestic diversions.
10. Peter Doherty (manager of Doncaster Rovers) once used tailor's dummies to help his team in training. It is not true that the director of another Yorkshire club tried to outbid a men's outfitting establishment for the transfer of two of the dummies.
11. Wing-men need the speed of greyhounds.. This is a winger Gloggleton United were hoping to sign, but his shooting was not good enough and the deal fell through.

12. Many footballers have to be taught how to kick correctly. So do chorus girls. These are chorus girls, and they look much more attractive than footballers.

13. The caption tells the story: 'Chumley, the Gloggleton United centre-forward, foils the Watchet Wanderers' centre-half, Herman Slot, in a desperate tussle for the ball—before firing in a tremendous shot which grazed the woodwork.

14. Off the field, footballers rely on the '3 D's' to keep them fit . . . dominoes, darts and draughts.

15. This is a famous Irish sportsman stopping an opponent's progress. When tried in a recent League soccer match, similar tactics were surprisingly penalized by an over-zealous referee.

16. Sometimes players ordered off the field are not entirely in agreement with the referee's verdict. For this reason, approximately two-thirds of the strength of the local constabulary always attend football matches. In this picture Turkish policemen are persuading a banished player that he ought to leave the field.

17. The Englishman abroad. It is often stated that England's international footballers do not enjoy their overseas tours. In the above picture a group of them are seen tolerating a recent one.

18. The foreigner here. It is also sometimes claimed that the great Hungarian, Russian and South American football teams do not relish playing under typical British conditions. Would anyone?

19. The foreigner abroad. In some countries the ball used is not of standard size, and is either too large or too small to be propelled by human beings. Horses (or ants) are then brought into service. These are not ants.

20. Before the war, professional footballers could afford only the oldest of motor cars for pleasure motoring. This one was owned by an international player who bought it on hire purchase for 10d. per week.

21. Since 1945, however, players' wages have rocketed, and it is not unusual for a goalkeeper to arrive at a match driving one of these up-to-date, streamlined vehicles.

22. A recent portrait of Colonel O. L. D. Moore, one of Soccer's virile young legislators. Colonel Moore excels at many sports, including shinty, knur and spell, and dominoes (as demonstrated here).

THE AUTHOR

An Appreciation by His Only Friend

This picture is reproduced by kind permission of the Police Gazette

The author's frequent appearances at the Old Bailey have really made this article superfluous, but in all fairness to anyone misguided enough to read beyond this point, I feel that some mention should be made of the highlights of his distinguished career.

He was born. Rather delicate as a child, he quickly developed a sedate and unruffled temperament, and by the time he reached his seventh birthday, only the utterance of the word 'work' could induce a violent reaction in him. This is, I think, the only one of his childlike characteristics which has survived to the present day.

His schooling was undertaken by that very fine educational establishment, the Gloggleton County School for Children. Although, as its title implies, the school was primarily designed for children, an exception was made in the author's case. Com-

menting publicly on his old school, he once said, 'All the masters were men—except the mistresses,' thus demonstrating, and not for the first time, his uncanny powers of observation. There is no doubt that 'Gloggers', as the establishment is affectionately dubbed by its pupils (not to be confused with 'Cloggers' as the local football club is sometimes termed), has turned out many fine citizens.

The author himself was turned out by the Board of Directors following a slight *contretemps* involving that wholly admirable school institution—the headmaster's daughter. Since that unfortunate affair, Boards of Directors, so long as they are not paying his wages, have always tended to bring out the worst in the author.

Such an auspicious start to adult life automatically qualified the author for entry into the Civil Service where he became a Letter-Slitter, Grade 5B(Temp.) and where he soon acquired the knack of being completely uncivil and providing practically no service. After 12 years' devoted, if not civil, service he was rewarded for his go-ahead, ambitious, diligent work—promotion to Letter-Slitter Grade 5A (Perm.). (By the way, this has nothing to do with Football Pools. They are due to be crucified later.) Further advancement was rapid and the author subsequently reached the highly-paid and responsible post of Chief Tea-Maker to the Minister for External Conveniences. The Minister frequently made allusions to his Ministry's appreciation of the author's concoctions, but such witticisms were wasted on the author who was much too ignorant to appreciate them.

His sporting career was no less distinguished. Draughts champion of East Huntingdon in 1930, he was versatile enough to switch his game and top the averages of the Clackmannanshire Housey-Housey League just one year later. A prominent and respected figure in the football world, he was appointed, in 1935, to the post of Deputy Chief Programme Seller to Swindon Town and achieved another ambition by becoming a director of St Bernard's Football Club two years after the club was disbanded. As the County Football Association had not been informed of the demise of St Bernard's, the author benefited by receiving an annual allocation of 45 tickets for the FA Cup Final. Unfortunately greed overcame business acumen, and following a complaint from the author that 44 of the tickets were not in the Royal Box, the supply of tickets was stopped. He promptly registered his protest by resigning from the Board.

There has been some doubt expressed as to the capacity of the author to undertake such a learned work as this: the doubts arose, I understand, over his repeated nomination of Charlie Chumley (Gloggleton United) as centre-forward for the England international team, which occasioned the comment from the Popular Press that he knew as little about football as Chumley did. In other words he had most of the qualifications of an international selector.

There is no doubt, however, that considerable literary genius is hidden in this book (well hidden), and that a promising career lies ahead for the author on his release from the institution in which he is at present detained.

The Author's Ghost—making his first and last materialization

Chapter One

Introduction, Mainly Historical, but Partly Hysterical

ONCE UPON a time England were known as the Kings of Football, but it is a regrettable fact (for England) that at the present day, every other country in the world seems to possess an ace or a trump which will beat the king. It is in order to explain this fall from grace that this illustrious work has been prepared, but, as most English football followers are only too well acquainted with the facts, its educational value will be appreciated primarily by foreign (and Irish) visitors to 'Angleterre' (a French word meaning rain-sodden).

In the beginning, England were able to boast of prowess as 'First Lords of the Leather Sphere', in much the same way as we boast of a long line of British successes in the Boat Race. In time, however, one or two other countries started to play football. Once the British International Championship was instituted, much propaganda was made of the fact that it was always won by a British team. The only deviation from this custom was when England won it, the word English then being substituted for British. This is the first known instance of the use and abuse of substitutes in soccer.

We have no intention of delving deeply into a detailed history of the game at this juncture, because that will come later, if the reader is still with us, but mention must be made of the development of this noble game in other parts of the world.

As is the normal practice in foreign countries, foreign words are used to describe football: for instance in Scotland it is called 'fitba'; in France, 'piedballe' (*Eng. trans.*—football); in Germany it is known as 'Reichball' (*Eng. trans.*—

football) and in China it becomes 蹴球 (*Eng. trans.*—football). These and other countries adopted the game pretty well on the lines of our system, apart from one or two purely technical refinements.

In Ireland, the fields on which football is played—secretly, in twenty-six of the counties—are covered with a special form of grass called shamrock. In Brazil, the natives surround their football pitches with water and/or barbed wire to prevent players molesting the spectators. There is a Chinese version of the game in which most things are arranged the wrong way around, both goals being placed at the centre of the pitch with centre lines duplicated and marked in green paint at either end. The use of green paint caused some confusion at first, but a simple solution was discovered when a Chungking groundsman invented a method of bleaching the grass white. Subsequently Chinese observers visited Britain and were much disconcerted to note that all lines were marked in white chalk: consequently since their return to their native country they have been conducting experiments into the possibility of dying white grass green. Their latest research is centred on inversion of the process which takes place whenever snow falls on normal, or non-white, grass.

Taking it by and large, though, football is played throughout the world much as it was in England eighty years ago, except that nowadays more people play the game and more watch it. This means that more people are connected with it, because more people play it and more people watch it.

There is no doubt that football has reached the point where it is an important factor in world affairs. This is the result of steady progress during the twentieth century. About 1933, Germany developed a very strong right-wing, a fact widely publicized by a noted scribe, one Mr. Goebbels, in his Sunday newspaper column titled, quaintly, 'Proper gander at football'. After the war the Russians developed a left-wing pair of renown whose names were such bywords

in the world of sport that they were known everywhere simply as 'B' and 'K'. They became as well known as our own stars 'M' and 'B' and 'H' and 'C'.

It is a well known fact that all teams in Russia play in red shirts; and that all teams in Italy, before the war, favoured black shirts. Such ideas have tremendous advantages: offhand we can think of the boon to club managers who need never be perturbed at the thought of a clash of colours, and what a merciful relief to think that this system would completely sabotage any prospects of matches being televised. One minor disadvantage is the great confusion caused among players and spectators, but as neither players nor spectators are regarded as terribly important by soccer's legislators, that disadvantage is hardly worthy of mention.

So much for the way the ball is rolling today. Now let us turn to a more detailed, if somewhat deliberately detached, study of football. For the benefit of readers who are beginning the story at this point, it should be pointed out that this book is about football. And for those who began at the beginning—this book is about football.

The origins of football are shrouded in antiquity, but from sundry writings handed down from generation to generation, we have been able to deduce that a form of the game was played by the younger Ancient Britons, which means it must have been organized by the ancient Ancient Britons. The system applies to this day.

As leather had not been invented in the days of the Ancient Britons, it is probable that the ball used was the head of some unfortunate member of a neighbouring tribe (*e.g.* Picts, and Scots, etc.) who had been unlucky enough to be captured in battle. Everybody seemed quite satisfied with this state of affairs, with the exception of the previously mentioned member of a neighbouring tribe (*e.g.* Picts, and Scots, etc.) responsible for providing the ball. In Scotland and Pictland, where most of the neighbouring tribes (*e.g.* Picts and Scots) were either Picts or Scots, the whole business was bitterly deplored and has never been forgotten

or forgiven. Indeed the cry, 'Keep yir heid' (*Eng. trans.*—Keep your head) can be heard on Scottish grounds even now in this season of 1956–57.

In those early days clothing, like leather for footballs, had not been invented and members of the various teams stained their bodies with differently coloured dyes—this being the origin of the modern custom of wearing different coloured soccer shirts. (*N.B.*—Stripes, hoops, and quarters did not appear until much later, but it is believed that such diversions originated in China, where spectators were constantly staging revolutions in protest against the practice of staining footballers' bodies with yellow dye, thus making identification absolutely impossible.)

It is interesting to recall that even in the days of the Ancient Britons, discreet hints were being dropped about the necessity of contrasting colours. Most of these hints came from the ancestors of the inventors of television whenever they met to gnaw a bone in their lime grove.

Football among the not-quite-so-Ancient Britons was not particularly well organized and most of the games were played on a friendly basis, but there was one competition which, according to records in the English Museum at Lancaster Gate, was probably the forerunner of the FA

Cup Competition. This competition was known as the 'Woaden Spoon'. It is worth noting that the modern expression 'Wooden Spoon' which might, or might not, easily be derived from the old competition, has entirely the opposite meaning. It is a term applied to the worst, not the best, team in a competition.

Early concrete evidence of football in Britain is at Stonehenge, the palaeolithic Highbury, where the goalposts and crossbars, fashioned in stone, may still be clearly seen. Stonehenge was the home of the 'Salisbury Druids' and players of that club were easily recognizable by their club tie, a long white beard, and club badge, a halo. Each summer they used to run their own five-a-side competition which they called the Eisteddfod. (*Welsh trans.*—Five-a-side competition.)

After the Salisbury Druids had passed their peak of success, the English football scene was somewhat disrupted, due to concentration on repulsing a number of invaders who were not very interested in football. These included the Saxons, Angles, Gauls, Danes, and our old friends the Picts and Scots (see earlier part of this chapter).

Following numerous battles, which persisted over a number of years, the Ancient Britons—though by then extinct—had persuaded these invaders to take up football and several new teams were formed. The only invaders who declined to play were the Picts and Scots, who still felt they were inclined to lose face wherever football was being popularized. One or two cultural advances were made during the succeeding peaceful years, the most important of these innovations dealing with the ball. A persistent source of worry to all concerned was the diminishing supply of Picts and Scots (mentioned earlier in this chapter). The Saxons, who knew all the Angles, considered it a waste of good Picts (and Scots) when one Scot (or Pict) provided only one head (or ball).

By experimenting with a number of Picts (and Scots) who had already been beheaded by a Sports Goods Manu-

facturer, it was discovered that by removing the skin of the unfortunate Scot (or Pict), and stuffing it with his entrails, four, and sometimes five, footballs could be obtained from one Pict (or Scot).

Spurred on by this success, the boys in the back caves tried to persuade the providers of heads, skin, entrails etc. to grow a new set of heads, skin, entrails etc., but little progress was made along this line of research as the Pict (or Scot)—having been deprived of his head, skin, entrails etc., showed an unsporting tendency to stop living.

Any scoreyet?

The next occasion on which history interfered with football was in the year 1066, which was also famous for something else, an event which we cannot quite bring to mind. There had been a large quantity of rain that year—an unusual occurrence in England—and it was found impossible to play the Cup Final at Stonehenge, hitherto the normal practice, due to flooding. It was decided to use a new ground at a place called Hastings (near St Leonards) and accordingly, one afternoon, a large crowd gathered to watch the match which was, so history reluctantly informs us, between Wessex Wanderers and Danelaw North End.

This was the first all-ticket match, the tickets being 3 ft. by 2 ft. blocks of granite which served a very useful double purpose. As spectators staggered to the game under the weight of their granite slabs, they heaved these strange tickets on to the ground—and sat on them.

This originated the system of all season ticket holders being guaranteed a seat. (NOTE.—In case any reader may wonder why the famous Salisbury Druids were not playing at Hastings, I should mention that some years earlier, they had followed the depressing example of the Ancient Britons, and become depressingly extinct.)

Wessex Wanderers had taken the lead with a goal by their centre-forward Harold King, when a gentleman named William the Conqueror landed, together with a large army of other gentlemen, all of whom had apparently been christened Norman, and none of whom had the slightest interest in football. William, with the aid of this Army, set about players and spectators alike, and killed nearly everyone in sight, including Harold King. He then proclaimed himself ruler of England and head of the Referees' Association. His followers who, as previously mentioned, knew nothing about football, were, of course, appointed directors of the leading clubs.

There followed a long and comparatively peaceful period, during which few developments took place. The game had its ups and downs depending upon the degree of interest shown in it by royalty. Thus soccer hit a new peak of popularity under Richard the Lion Heart, who did so much travelling abroad that he doubled his duties of monarch with those of secretary of the Soccer Association. This wave of soccer popularity came to an abrupt halt in the reign of Henry VIII, who was too busy with wives, executioners, Wolsey, etc., to worry very much about football.

For a short time, following the accession to the throne of James I (or VI), who was really a Scot (or Pict) in disguise, some leading teams forsook the nice new leather ball which

had been brought back from America by Sir Walter Raleigh, and reverted to the old, decadent practice of playing with freshly chopped-off heads—English heads this time. Keen observers, and the Press, noticed, however, that all these throw-back teams were being sponsored by the King, who was really a Pict (or Scot) in disguise. In the circumstances it is not surprising that Cromwell, who possessed a most desirable Round Head, soon put a stop to such nonsense.

After Cromwell had followed the deplorable example of the Ancient Britons and the Druids, and become deplorably extinct, evolution of our present football system was rapid. With no help whatsoever from outside bodies, least of all the Picts and Scots, the situation deteriorated until the present set-up emerged from the confusion.

NOTE TO ALL READERS WHO HAVE STAYED WITH US UP TO THIS POINT

If you have read up to this point, you should ask yourself this question: 'Have I read up to this point?' If the answer is 'No', what reason did you have for asking that question?

'Numbers are sometimes punched in braille for the benefit of certain referees'

Chapter Two

The Present Set-up

THE PRESENT highly complicated organization of football in England is the result of the long and tiring evolution described in Chapter 1 (also long and tiring), and it seems probable that the whole system was designed either by a politician or a cricket enthusiast.

Nowadays, each team is allowed eleven players only—a refinement unknown in the days of Salisbury Druids. This rule is very strictly adhered to, although on foggy days, one or two teams have been observed slipping on a couple of extra men during the heat of battle; or so their opponents' manager would have us believe. This reprehensible practice is always employed by foreign teams . . . fog or no fog.

To help the referee keep a check on this, all players apart from the goalkeeper (*Eng. trans.*—madman), bear on their backs—or shirts, if the club is a wealthy one—a number between 2 and 11 inclusive. It should be stressed that these numbers are insisted upon solely to help the referee, although there is a widely held misconception that they indicate the position on the field of play which the bearer occupies. This is completely untrue. Numbers are necessary so that the referee can write the number in his book if he does not like the player. These numbers are sometimes punched in braille for the benefit of certain referees.

The goalkeeper is always nattily dressed in a woollen jersey of a distinctive green, blue, red, or yellow hue—unless he is from Hungary, in which case he wears black as a mark of respect and in mourning for the opposition. The custom of having goalkeepers attired in bright colours dates back to about 1850 (give or take a hundred years), when, following changes in the Laws of the Game, the position of goalkeeper became a most unpopular and highly dangerous one. This necessitated an Act being passed through Parliament whereby any felon serving a life sentence in Newgate Prison, was permitted to shorten his sentence (and his life) by playing in goal for a leading team. To prevent any attempted escapes, however, the Prison Governors ruled that these hired prisoners must wear distinctive Newgate uniforms while playing. We would like to point out here that, despite what used to be a startling similarity to the Newgate strip, none of the players of the author's former club, Bradford Park Avenue, are either convicted or unconvicted felons. The same can be said about Partick Thistle. It is indeed strange how involved one can become while simply attempting to explain how it became the recognized thing for the goalkeeper to be dressed differently from the rest of his colleagues.

The Football League. A conglomeration (*Eng. trans.*—shower) of clubs forms what is known as a League. There are many famous Leagues in existence, the best known—despite the Football League's claim to be the premier competition—being the Arab League, and the League of Nations.

(This latter has now followed the disgusting example of a number of other organizations previously dealt with, and become disgustingly extinct.)

The premier League in England is known as the Football League, and in an attempt to complicate matters still further, it has been subdivided into four divisions. A logical mind, not the author's, would suggest that these divisions

should be numbered one, two, three, and four respectively, but the genius who designed the system decided this was too simple to understand. He numbered divisions one and two in the normally accepted sequence, but then, unable to count up to four, he divided the clubs left over into two sections which were known as the Third Division (North) and the Third Division (South).

The reason for this somewhat obscure nomenclature—apart from the originator's previously mentioned inability to count up to four—is that all the clubs in the Third Division (North) are geographically situated to the north of all the clubs in the Third Division (South), and all the clubs in the Third Division (South) are geographically situated to the south of all the clubs in the Third Division (North), or vice versa, except in one or two odd cases where those in the north are south of those in the Third Division (North) and those in the south are north of those in the Third Division (South), or something! Then, there are those in the Midlands; but it might only complicate things if an attempt were made to simplify this business further.

The layout of any football league may be summed up very conveniently by the use of a chart, similar to the multiplication tables taught at schools. This chart is known

'The Cup (North Eng. trans.—t'Coop is organized on what is known as the knock-out principle, a highly apt description'

as the League Table, and may, or may not, read as follows:

11 players	=	1 team (except Continental teams)
3 teams	=	1 club (except some clubs who have up to 8, and some who haven't even 1, never mind 3)
22 clubs	=	1 Division (except the Third who have 24)
4 Divisions	=	1 League (in this case the Football League, with no exceptions)

This League Table, like the kiddies' multiplication table, is quite simple to assimilate, in fact it is believed that in ancient days members of the League Management Committee, like the kiddies, picked it up by chanting it repeatedly to the tune of 'All good pals together'.

The Football League is what is known in political and other insane circles, as a closed shop: in other words it is practically impossible for a club outside the League to get in, or for that matter, for a club inside the League to get out. There have been one or two notable exceptions, and some clubs have managed to creep in when the League wasn't looking ... chief among these being Ipswich Town, Shrewsbury Town and Gloggleton United.

Playing arrangements.—Each club plays annually in two competitions, the League and the Cup, the League competition being run, as we have already seen, by the Football League (a wholly admirable institution). The Cup is conducted by an august body of gentlemen who have not, up to now, made an appearance in these pages, known as the Football Association.

This august body is called the Football Association because it is an associated association of men associated with Association football. (It is the author's one regret that they did not follow the general example and become generally extinct before he was forced to compose that last sentence.)

The Cup (*North Eng. trans.*—t'Coop) is organized on what is known as the knock-out principle, a highly apt description. The basic idea underlying the knock-out system is that once a team is beaten it can take no further part in the competition that season. A similar system operates in the Olympic Games soccer tournament. But when the knocked-out team happens to be Gt. Britain—knocked out by Bulgaria, say—they are permitted to remain in the competition. The battle—the word is used in its broadest sense—for t'Coop (*Eng. trans.*—the Cup) commences in September each year, and by the following May, after approximately 8,026 games have been played (give or take a couple of thousand), and much blood has been shed, there are only two teams left in the tournament.

These teams then get return tickets to Wembley Park (see map of London Underground which is not on opposite page) and there play a game, the winners of which are adjudged Cup holders. (*Eng. trans.*—Holders of the Cup or t'Coop.)

The Cup itself, which really is not a Cup at all, as it possesses no saucer, is a handsome piece of silverware which could be pawned for not a penny less than twelve and sixpence. A detailed report of the game at Wembley Park is always published in the final edition of the evening paper of that particular day, and this special edition has come to be known as the 'Cup Final'.

In comparison with the Cup, the League competition is a very long-drawn-out affair (like Chapter 1). While the Cup lasts only from September to May, the League persists from August to May. Each team in any one Division is forced to play each of the other teams in the Division twice during the season, whether they like it or not, giving a total of 42 games in all—except in the Third Division. This is so that club records may be kept neater by having 21 home games and 21 away games. (For not-so-advanced mathematicians, $21 + 21 = 42$.)

At the end of each season there is a lot of excitement about

a dreadful business called 'Promotion and Regurgitation'. In simple language, what happens is that the top two teams in each Division are promoted to the Division above (except, for obvious reasons, in the case of Division One), and the bottom two teams are regurgitated into the Division below.

In the case of a team being promoted (or regurgitated from the Third Division (North) (or South), to the Third Division (South) (or North), or vice versa, it is usually necessary for the team in question to move its headquarters north (or south) until it is further north (or south) than the northernmost (or southernmost) club in the Third Division (South) (or North), or vice versa. Then there are those in the Midlands, but it might only complicate things if an attempt were made to simplify this business further. At the start of a new season, the teams promoted, or regurgitated, operate in their new Divisions, and the whole pointless business starts all over again.

Them what stands and watches. In recent years, many more people have taken to watching football matches, probably because the Human Race (to which the author would give his right arm, or preferably his left foot to belong) has become lazier now than it was when it was not so lazy as it is now. The pastime of watching football has become a highly-skilled and very exacting science, and is known as 'spectating'. (*Eng. trans.*—watching football.) Spectators can be roughly divided, if they do not object too violently, into three main classes:

(1) Those who have come to see a game of football, and are not worried which side is victorious (sportsmen).

(2) Those who have come to see their own team play, and win (sportsmen).

(3) Those who have come solely to get away from the wife for a few hours (unsportsmen).

Classes (1) and (3) are very much in the minority, so we will not deal with them at all. Indeed, there is every possibility that they will follow the unbearable example of the heroes in Chapter 1 and become unbearably extinct.

The routine of becoming a Supporter is complicated and tricky, and it takes a long time for the newcomer to the soccer scene to be accepted into the trade unions which these people organize, and which are called Supporters' Clubs. Qualities necessary in a good supporter are:

(*a*) He must never say anything detrimental about his own team.

(*b*) He must never praise an opposing team UNLESS he is considerably outnumbered and surrounded by the supporters of that team, when it may be permitted for the sake of personal safety. (See sketch, which should be somewhere handy.)

(*c*) He must always make rude remarks about the referee and linesmen, no matter whose company he is in. (See Chapter 6 for things to say about referees and linesmen.)

(*d*) He must be juvenile enough to enjoy blowing up coloured balloons, and propelling them skywards while at the same time wielding a noisy instrument called a 'corncrake'.

(*e*) He must never expect a ticket to attend an important cup-tie, but must never fail to attend all uninteresting, run-of-the-mill, League matches against all uninteresting, run-of-the-mill teams.

Triviata (*or* **La Bohème**). Apart from League and Cup matches, there are sundry other games played during the season. Of these by far the most important are the International matches, which is why many clubs try to prevent their players playing in them. The main value of these international matches is the friendship they engender between nations, or so we are led to believe. A more rational view to take would be that they bring many friendly nations into contact—often violent contact—with each other, after which they are no longer friendly.

Notwithstanding these several brushes, the international selectors are always on a safe bet if, when making a speech at the after-match banquet, they talk about 'cementing international friendships'. It is a moot point, and an important one for conjecture, that if all the cement used at international banquets by football officials, had been used to build houses, the housing shortage in St. Peter Port might have been eased.

We cannot leave the subject of special matches without a word or two about the 'local derby', which has nothing to do with public houses, horse races or Derbyshire. A local derby is a match between two teams having neighbouring grounds, and is a glorious excuse for a large amount of mayhem, battle and bloodshed, both on the playing pitch and around the terracing. During a particularly exciting moment in a recent local derby in the Midlands, the visiting inside-right was seen to approach the home side's left-back and ask the question, 'Hey, where's the ball?', to which he received the reply, 'Never mind the ball, let's get on with the game.'

The Official Programme. By far the most fascinating feature of present-day football is the journal, or team sheet, which each club issues on match days, and which is known as the Official Programme. This may contain, among a positive welter of advertisements, the line-up of the contesting teams, separated, somewhat surprisingly, by a large, and extremely vicious looking razor blade.

In addition the programme often includes the club's list of fixtures for the remainder of the season, inserted undoubtedly as a morale booster to hoodwink supporters into thinking that sufficient support will be forthcoming to keep the club going for the remainder of the season.

Then, of course, no programme would be complete without the relative standings in the League table in which the club competes . . . the figures being calculated to three weeks previous to the game. If in the top half of the League, the name of the club will appear in thick black capital letters: if in the bottom four places, the standing order to the printer is, no black, no capital letters.

The programme usually contains an article by a club official, or some other equally incompetent person. We cannot do better than print verbatim the following example, which appeared in a recent Gloggleton United programme, and which most people will agree is typical of this sorry variety of journalism.

GLOGGLETON GOSSIP *by Looker-On*

'This afternoon we extend a hearty welcome to our visitors from Wolverhampton, the famous Bolting Wanderers' club, and trust that the usual sporting[1] game will be witnessed.

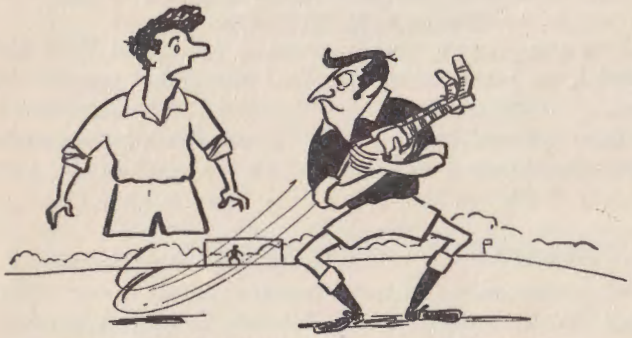
'We were extremely unlucky to lose at Blackpool last week, and those of our supporters who made the journey will agree that the 8—0 score in our opponents' favour was not a true reflection of the run of the play. It is idle to speculate what might have happened had we been awarded that penalty kick which we justly deserved in the second minute, but it is certainly true that our lads were visibly disheartened thereafter.

'There must be some element of doubt about Blackpool's second, fifth, and seventh goals—all of which looked palpably offside from the stand. And how the referee did

[1] NOTE.—If the game is a local derby, the word *sporting* is amended to *enjoyable*.

not see that the fourth goal was punched in, will for ever remain a mystery. Also, several purely neutral witnesses, including a Swede, a Swiss and a Southern Irishman, have stated that the ball did not cross the line for either the third or eighth goals . . . yet time after time our lads had their protests over-ruled.

'Our cup of woe was full when, in the first five minutes of the second half, the referee disallowed what appeared to be three perfectly good goals by our centre-forward Charlie Chumley—all for no apparent reason. Charlie had more



'Whipped his legs from under him'

than his share of the rub of the green when the Blackpool left-half, who shall be unnamed, whipped his legs from under him four times in four minutes. An indirect free-kick was rewarded on each occasion, but prudence insists that I do no more than pass the detached opinion that while players like the anonymous Blackpool left-half and unnamed officials like the one in charge of this game continue to disgrace our grand National game, the future is indeed black and cloudy.

'How different was our mid-week game at Sunderland. Our boys played magnificently, and with a little more steadiness in front of goal, I am sure we could easily have run up double figures. As it was, we had to be satisfied with

a hotly-disputed lone goal notched by Chumley two minutes from the end, a grand effort which proved sufficient to give us the two points at steak.'

NOTE TO ALL READERS.—If you actually paid money to buy this book—thanks!

APPENDIX

Question Time

IT IS apparently the fashion in books of this nature (has there ever been one like this?) to include at this point, or some other point a quiz, or test paper, of some kind. The object, of course, is to ensure that readers have been skimping through and not digesting the learned work thoroughly. We therefore make no apology for the following advanced paper in Applied Football. (If the questions are too advanced, just look at the pictures.)

TIME—The Present. Please answer all questions truthfully. Write on all four sides of the paper.

(1) Say, in so many words, what you think of present-day football. An adjective and a noun will suffice. MARKS 20.

(2) What is your opinion of the author of this book? Watch your language, please. MARKS 15.

(3) Explain, without reference to your local Member of Parliament, the connexion between football and (*a*) A foot; (*b*) A ball. MARKS 15.

(4) Give 43 different ways in which Einstein's Theory of Relativity can be related to (*a*) Scunthorpe United; (*b*) Einstein; (*c*) Relativity. MARKS 50.

(5) 'Ice cream is served at half-time in only 17 of the 92 Football League grounds.' Dilute this statement. MARKS 10.

(6) If Walsall beat Crystal Palace 2–2 and Accrington Stanley draw with Workington Town 4–1, how long would it take 10 men to dig a 30 ft. hole in half a day? Please answer in yards, litres, and ounces. MARKS 10.

(7) Correct the following statement: 'England's selectors have produced a superb international team.' MARKS 2.
(8) If there are sixteen studs in each boot, and two boots for each player, and eleven players in each team, and two teams in opposition, how does a one-footed full-back catch a flying winger? (This is a catch question.) MARKS 15.
(9) If Tranmere Rovers play at Birkenhead, Brighton play at Hove, Grimsby Town play in Cleethorpes, Johannesburg play at Charlton, and Sir Laurence Olivier plays at the Victoria Palace, why don't Crewe play in Alexandria? MARKS 10.
(10) Why are you wasting your time with all this? MARKS 5.

HOW TO GAUGE YOUR SOCCER KNOWLEDGE FROM THE ABOVE QUIZ:

More than 150 marks	You're as crazy as the author.
100 to 150 marks	You should make a packet on Commercial TV Quiz shows.
50 to 100 marks	Did you cheat?
20 to 50 marks	You are an average soccer fan.
Below 20 marks	You have all the qualifications to be a club director.

PUBLISHER'S NOTE.—After reading this Appendix, we considered surgery. The removal of such an Appendix (quaintly called Question Time) is obviously desirable, but would unfortunately remove the author also.

Chapter Three (A)

Football League Meeting, 1966

HAVING SPENT so much time in the past, studying all that ridiculous data about Picts, Scots, Stonehenge and Roundheads, it is the author's intention to whisk his readers (if he has not already lost them) ten years into the future on odd occasions in this odd book. The initial journey on the magic carpet takes us to a Café, which is not a Café at all, just off Piccadilly Circus in London where on a Saturday morning in June 1966, delegates are foregathered for the annual meeting of the Football League.

Wasting as little time as possible on preliminaries—characteristic of neither a Football League Meeting, nor of this book—we dive in immediately with the first item on the agenda, proposed by Alderman 'Hopalong' Hardcastle, JP, B & K, US, the esteemed chairman of Gloggleton United FC.

'Hopalong', whose nickname was inevitable as he had one leg 10 inches shorter than the other, was fighting for reorganization of the Divisions of the League and his oration was so powerfully delivered that there was never a doubt about his closing volley swaying the meeting.

Ignoring the earlier part of his speech, we reprint only the parting shot, 'It is with great confidence in the good sense of my colleagues that I make this final appeal for the four-up and two-down promotion and relegation system to operate from next season.' The motion was passed unanimously.

Unfortunately, it became obvious ten years later—which should be about 1976—that the First Division had somehow increased to forty-two clubs, while the Second Division could boast no more than two. The Third Divisions, who were not, of course, permitted any part of this new plan,

were still composed of twenty-four clubs in each section. So let us see what might happen in 1976.

Realizing that one more season of four-up, two-down would mean the end of the Second Division, every director at the 1976 meeting set out to find a scapegoat . . . and promptly sacked the manager nearest to him. The real culprit, 'Hopalong' Hardcastle, whose mental reasoning was akin to his physical stature—lopsided—was supplied with a 10-inch block of wood which was slipped under his short leg whenever he spoke. This ruse was calculated to give him a more balanced outlook.

Refusing to repent, he stood on this block to inform the 1976 meeting, 'While all clubs look forward to promotion, none of us likes going down, and I insist that four-up, two-down is the perfect compromise.' Under pressure from all sides, however, he realized that the scheme was impractical and, as its originator, it was up to him to save the day with another master stroke of legislation.

One way out of the dilemma would have been the transfer *en bloc* (this has nothing to do with 'Hopalong's' block) of the surplus First Division teams into the Second Division, but as no clubs would vote for their own relegation, this sensible scheme did not stand a chance of securing sufficient votes.

Throwing away his block, which unfortunately hit, and mortally wounded, the manager of a non-League club who was there to apply for League election, 'Hopalong' proposed the following, 'We must bring the Third Division into this scheme. If we allow them to enjoy the benefits of four-up and two-down, the Second Division will be back to full strength in no time at all.'

It is worth mentioning at this point that, although efforts had been made to keep the poorer clubs out of the scheme, they were now being given a break . . . for the very good reason that they were the only ones available to save the Hardcastle plan. As in 1966, this lopsided legislation received full support.

There was only one dissenter, Colonel O. L. D. Moore, whose main, perhaps only, claim to recognition lay in his ability to look into the future. Colonel Moore, after making numerous notes on his old army pay-book, informed the assembly, 'In 23 years' time, the First Division will be about right, but there will be 48 teams in the Second Division and only two in the Third.'

Always the master of repartee, 'Hopalong' immediately silenced the opposition, outflanking the Colonel in the process, when, in a memorable speech, he said, 'This plan of mine is really the logical method of forming a Super League, advocated by so many people for so many years. It could in time lead to a First Division of 92 clubs. In addition, we are being unusually generous to the Third Division, who are always appealing for more voting power. By the time we reach the impasse foreseen by Colonel Moore, the Third Division will still have its two votes, and only two clubs to share them.' A storm of applause greeted this masterpiece of clear thinking, and a further round of cheering accompanied a vote of thanks to the Café usher, who had produced the wooden block which had made 'Hopalong's' thinking so unexpectedly clear.

Returning ten years to 1966, which we should never have left, the next item on the League Meeting agenda is the re-election of the bottom clubs in the Third Division, and consideration of claims for League status from those outside the League. Wigan Wanderers, making their 50th application in 50 seasons, put up a reasonable case involving such items as average home attendances of 65,000 in the Lancashire Combination, the building of a new £50,000 grandstand, ownership of their 70,000-capacity stadium, and a playing record of 40 victories in 40 matches. They received two votes.

'Hopalong' Hardcastle, JP, B & K, US, then rose to state the case for his club Gloggleton United . . . making their fifth application for re-election in five seasons. 'Gentlemen, and the representatives of non-League clubs,

I am prepared to concede that my challengers for League status, Wigan Wanderers, have a useful playing record with 40 wins in 40 games, but Gloggleton United can do even better than that. We may have tailed off a little in the latter part of the season after September, but at one time, we had played only seven matches, and won eleven of them.'

This return to 'Hopalong's' well-known lopsided method of reasoning had been caused by the usher's omission to produce the wooden block, a quirk of fate which probably earned Gloggleton United yet another reprieve as members of the League. Gloggleton, the team which had won 11 games out of 7, polled 26 votes, thus defeating Wigan by 24. (*E.g.* 26 minus 2 = 24.)

Moving on to the next item, the chairman of a club in the West of England commandeered the floor to protest about too many representative and international games taking place. He had been consulting Colonel O. L. D. Moore and had worked out that, with so many clubs in the First Division, the 1975–76 season would become the 1975–82 season, and, with so many League games to be played, his club would not be able to spare any players for such minor affairs as England *v* Hungary or the World Cup Final between England and Uruguay. 'Let the FA take the players from the Third Division,' he said. 'The two clubs in the Third Division will welcome the diversion after meeting each other every week during the 1975–82 season.'

An indecently patriotic delegate shouted across the body of the hall, 'Judging by the performances of the England team, they should play more, not fewer, games against the leading nations of the world.' It was later discovered that the patriot had not taken his oath of allegiance swearing the League as the premier competition, so he was evicted by an usher.

So we stagger on to another controversial point on the agenda—falling gates. Colonel Moore said that he could not understand what all the fuss was all about. The gates at his ground were securely screwed on, and they had never

had any trouble with them falling—so it was obvious that this problem was yet another Press campaign aimed at bringing clubs into disrepute with the paying public.

That might have been the end of the discussion on falling gates, but a director of Littlehampton Harriers shattered the complacency with the startling news that falling gates at his club had killed several spectators, a costly business because the accident occurred before those killed and wounded had passed through the turnstiles. He warned his audience 'if fatalities of this nature occur regularly the accumulative drain on spectating resources might be considerable by 1992'.

Once again it was the secretary who introduced a note of sanity by rapping his gavel on the table—an operation which unfortunately smashed three fingers on the right hand of a member of the Management Committee—and saying, 'Gentlemen, and representatives of non-League clubs, falling gates do not mean gates falling—they mean falling gates'.

It was decided to shelve this problem, despite the gloomy prophecy of Colonel O. L. D. Moore that in the 1975–82 season there might be several cold winters, while in the summers, many players might be inconsiderate enough to go on holiday. 'With no players playing, spectators might tend to stay away from the matches', was the pessimistic forecast of Colonel Moore.

With falling gates balanced precariously on the shelf, the next subject for discussion was a proposal, again from the chairman of a club in the West of England, to increase players' wages. Arguments, both for and against, were hurled across the hall and, although for a time the proposal appeared to have a slender chance of being carried, an impassioned speech from the member of the Management Committee whose fingers had been smashed earlier, brought tears to the eyes of everyone at the meeting as well as bringing an end to players' hopes of more money. (It was not realized that the man responsible for defeating the

proposal was wet-eyed not because of any sincerity in his powerful speech, but because his broken fingers were causing him considerable pain.)

In between sobs, he told the meeting, 'Footballers' wages have risen out of all proportion. In 1939 they stood at £8 a week, yet here we are in 1966, with players getting no less than £16 a week. In a few short years, wages have doubled, and I consider these men are overpaid, not underpaid. I get the same money when I sell a cabbage or a cauliflower as I did a year ago, but the professional footballer gets £1 more per week now than he did then. A player's wage compares very favourably with that of a miner (£28 a week), a dustman (£21 10s.), or a wet fish salesman (£25).'

As pointed out above, players were not awarded a wage increase.

There followed the usual hardy annuals, including a motion—passed unanimously—that a request should be forwarded to the Football Association for a larger share of Cup Final tickets for League clubs. The present system was 15,000 for each of the Final teams, and the remaining 70,000 more or less to the FA for distribution to friends. This was a disgraceful business, because, in the words of one speaker, 'My personal allocation of 128 tickets is useless, when you consider I have 3,000 customers registered with me for groceries. And our players are asking for tickets too.'

A director of Penzance Argyle put in his normal complaint about over-long journeys for his club at holiday time, and appealed to the League to give Argyle a club nearer home than Newcastle United... Penzance's traditional opponents on Good Friday and Easter Monday. It was decided to forward a request to the Fixtures Meeting that Penzance Argyle and Newcastle United should not meet at Easter, a request acted upon by that Meeting who, instead, arranged for Penzance to meet Middlesbrough. This decision pleased the Penzance representative, who thanked everyone concerned for knocking 10 miles off his club's journey.

Colonel O. L. D. Moore, looking into the future once again, warned Penzance Argyle that Middlesbrough would not be in Argyle's Division next season, and would probably be fulfilling an Easter Holiday fixture against Darlington. The compromise was reached when Penzance Argyle agreed, instead of playing Middlesbrough (as the eleven Darlington players might have confused the match), to meet Newcastle United in Easter friendly games home and away.

The final item on the agenda was the resignation of the Football League chairman who, with tears in his eyes (he had also been given the gavel treatment) said that, as he had reached the age of 78, he realized he was getting a bit past it, so he was taking over at the FA. Continuing in the same strain, he said, 'It breaks my heart to leave you, but you need a younger man, with vision, drive, and ideas to take over the reins and keep our ship on a steady course, gathering no moss. The candidates are three in number, their ages being 72, 73, and 87: all are members of the Management Committee, and all have served the cause valiantly.'

When each candidate had stated his case for election, and the votes had been counted, the 87-year-old, whose name, oddly enough, was Sir Odd Lee-Enough, was swept to victory on a block vote devised by a Pools permutation expert (see Chapter 13, if you're not superstitious).

One person objected to the result of the ballot, our old friend 'Hopalong' Hardcastle, who, having discarded his block, accidentally shattering a £1,500 chandelier while so doing, appealed for two men going up in place of the one who was coming down. Sir Odd Lee-Enough, overcame this slight aggravation, and thanked the Meeting for their demonstration of faith in his legislative ability. 'I am certain', he said, 'that I have been elected purely on my sporting background. It is no secret to the gentlemen, and representatives of non-League clubs, in this room that I showed no little ability as a darts exponent for my county as a young man.'

At the conclusion of this Football League Meeting (1966 version), the retiring chairman made his last speech as League chairman. It was short, and to the point: 'Now you can all go and have a quick one, but while we're all here, we might as well return in twenty minutes for the Football Association Meeting. Most of us are in that gang too, I believe.'

Patting themselves on the back (it is worth mentioning that they were all contortionists) the delegates filed out of the Café, which was not a Café at all, for their 'quick one', assuring themselves that, once again, they had done a fine job of work for British soccer.

Chapter Three (B)

Football Association Meeting, 1966

NO MORE than twenty minutes after the end of the Football League Meeting, the room was filled again with a laughing, happy, throng of familiar faces—the owners of those faces singing their theme song as they arrived:

'Here we are again,
Happy as can be,
All good pals and jolly good company.'

The meeting was called to order, or disorder, by the chairman, but he had hardly started his welcoming address before he was interrupted by the gentleman who had been chairman at the Football League Meeting earlier in the day.

Raising the gavel in a threatening manner, Sir Odd Lee-Enough declared, 'I resigned from the Football League, so that I could take over this mob, and unless I have the chair, I'm going back to the League.'

Faced by such an ultimatum, the members of the Football League—by this time in their new guise of members of the Football Association—immediately installed the new man as their chairman, while the one who had opened the meeting retired to the body of the hall . . . mumbling about misguided legislation, but secretly thankful to have escaped the gavel.

On with the chairman's opening speech: 'It has come to my ears that the Football League have been complaining about us, and have even criticized the Association for the way we handle such items as Cup Final ticket allocations.

'Although I feel it is wrong, in principle, to have this sort of dictation from the League, let us never forget that it is in everyone's interest for our two great national bodies to work in harmony. Besides, if we fall out with the League, it might be construed as a case of biting the hand that feeds us.'

Having duly censured his audience, the chairman asked the secretary for his review of 1965–66 international performances. It went something like this:

'In England's opening match we drew with the Isle of Man 4—3, but just in case anyone should think it a trifle odd to draw 4—3, I must mention that the FA member-in-charge was Mr 'Hopalong' Hardcastle, and unfortunately the trainer had omitted to include his wooden block in the baggage.' (Hopalong had changed his place on the League Management Committee for a seat on the FA Council, for the purpose of this meeting.)

It was agreed that, following such an unfortunate oversight, the trainer should be censured . . . and promoted to the FA coaching staff.

This mention of coaching brought the secretary, quite naturally, to a complaint from certain international selectors that the entire FA coaching system was again at fault for the Isle of Man match, and the party had been kept waiting for at least 45 minutes when the coach broke down on the way to Fleetwood Harbour. 'Although this is a rare occur-

rence, you have my assurance that FA coaching will be thoroughly investigated later in this meeting.

'Endeavouring all the time to build a settled International XI, only seven changes were made in the side for our second match, against Ireland at Cardiff. Although the Irishmen won 10—0, you have my assurance that there was no despondency about the result. England should have scored four or five goals in the opening ten minutes, and although Ireland got on top after the interval, they were never more than eight goals better than us.

'Coming to the match against Wales at Ballymena, the result, 10—1 to Wales, was a big improvement, as England scored one goal more than against Ireland—and it is no secret that the selectors' nine team changes were responsible for this added power and punch. I have been asked to mention that one of the selectors was very impressed with our team's kicking-in before the start of the game.

'Of course we did miss some scoring chances, but the League clubs were partly to blame: once again they were reluctant to release their players from their shackles, and on no fewer than four occasions, the England centre-forward Daniel Crockuet kicked his steel ball instead of the match ball.

'Much to the delight of your Council, and to the chagrin of the Press critics, the Continental soccer invasion was repulsed when our England boys won a resounding victory over the Principality of Monaco at Walsall by the score of 2—1. I mention, in passing, that as some sort of a nuptial occasion was being held in Monaco, only nine visiting players could be mustered for the journey to Walsall.

'In addition, three of Monaco's leading players had disappeared 48 hours before the match, following a most unfortunate run of bad luck at the tables in Monte Carlo. To make up the correct number of 22 players on the field, the Football Association member-in-charge called himself to an emergency meeting, and decided to loan Monaco two Walsall players, who happened to be at the

match as stand-in turnstile keepers. In the nick of time, it was discovered that no Englishman could play for a foreign nation, so, in order not to disappoint the volunteers who, by now, were changed to play, we decided to let them turn out for England. That meant we had 13 players to Monaco's 9, but this had nothing to do with the result.'

Accepting the expert opinion that an extra four men—two of them from Walsall—was neither here nor there, the result of the Monaco match put everyone in the best of spirits, which was just as well, with the controversial business of the England *v* Scotland international the next item in the secretary's report.

'I must apologize for a slight mishap over the arrangements for the England *v* Scotland game at Wembley, or Hampden Park, or wherever it should have been. It was most unfortunate that, with neither England nor Scotland quite certain about the venue for this international, England travelled to Glasgow while Scotland came to London. Both teams took the field at different stadiums—400 miles apart.

'Before we condemn this state of affairs, gentlemen, let us not forget that, for the first time for many years, there were no profits in the match for ticket racketeers. Tickets went twice as far as normally, and I am happy to report that 135,000 attended at Hampden Park, while another 100,000 were at Wembley . . . and there was no overcrowding. As businessmen, you will all appreciate that a new scheme for ticket distribution may have been born through this accidental clash of venues.

'For years we have wrestled with the problem of satisfying, not only the important people who want to see these big games, but also football fans: now it may be possible to sell tickets for one match at two different grounds, and if Wembley's capacity is no more than 100,000, why should we not sell 230,000 tickets, by utilizing Hampden Park as well, for the same game? It might, indeed, be the saving of soccer.'

Of course every excellent scheme has its flaw, and, just when it seemed as if the two-venue-one-match plan might be referred to a sub-committee, Mr A. Loofer, director of Bath United, rose to his feet to register his protest.

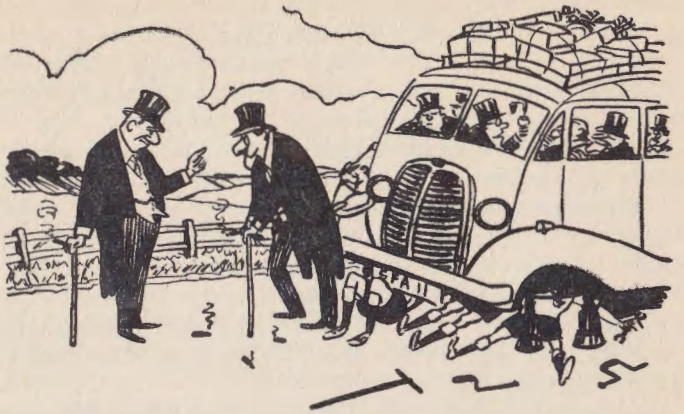
'I sold tickets for the England *v* Scotland match to one of my most influential customers: he bought two, but one was for Wembley and the other for Hampden Park. Naturally he could not attend both grounds, and the repercussions, once he discovered what had happened, meant a serious decline in my business. It is all very well staging one match which people cannot attend, but when you arrange two they cannot attend, there are certain to be complaints. In addition, having sold the Television rights twice to the same ITV company, the whole business became a farce when, at various "natural breaks" in the programmes, a well-known tobacco firm kept plugging their equally well-known slogan, "Footballers, please" . . . or something of that nature.'

After such a rousing speech, the scheme was abandoned *as it was not in the best interests of British soccer.*

A slightly dejected secretary of the Association was soon on his feet again to tell the meeting, 'As I promised earlier, we shall now discuss the FA coaching system. There have been a few complaints about our coaching ideas being somewhat behind the times, and although I admit we have had more than our share of punctures, leaking petrol tanks, and broken big ends, I still maintain that, on the whole, FA coaches do operate quite successfully.'

Various delegates joined in the free-for-all discussion—some appealing for a system whereby players picked for international games should also be qualified fitters or mechanics, in case the coach was sub-standard, and others arguing that, unless the FA coaches were not radically improved, taxi cabs should be used in their place.

The debate had been going on for three-quarters of an hour when a unique character—the only man in the room who had played soccer—asked if he might be permitted to



'In future all players chosen for England must also be fitters or engineers in case the coaching system breaks down'

say a few words. This odd man out, a Mr Matthew Finney from Watchet Wanderers, had always been regarded with suspicion by his colleagues, in fact they had strongly resisted his initial nomination for the Board of the Wanderers' club, but, revealing admirable tolerance, they had eventually sanctioned the appointment of this football expert as a club director. One square peg in a round hole, they reasoned, could hardly disrupt the legislation of the game.

Said Mr Finney, 'I do not want to detain you gentlemen, as I realize you all have your businesses to look after, but I feel I should point out that the FA coaches in need of improvement have nothing at all to do with transport. We are really concerned with the way our teams are trained and prepared for big matches, and not with how they travel.'

Having thus clarified the situation, Mr Matthew Finney returned to his armchair, and the honorary, or honourable (probably the former) secretary again took over. 'I should like to thank our friend for telling us that all our arguments

about coaches have been irrelevant. With this new information in our hands, it might also be a good idea when awarding coaching badges in future, to withdraw the concession of giving away AA badges with them: and, while having such a clean sweep, let us also end the practice whereby it was necessary for coaching applicants to strip down and reassemble motors, and mend punctures.'

(It had previously baffled the gentlemen of the FA why, out of 23 people entered for the most recent coaching examination, 11 had come from League clubs, and the other 18 from garages in West London.) For the benefit of any readers who can add, mention should should be made of the fact that our old friend Mr 'Hopalong' Hardcastle handed in those figures.

Colonel O. L. D. Moore, who unfortunately persists in popping up, was the next speaker. He told his audience, 'By about 1975, only two clubs will remain in the Third Division, and these will be the only clubs playing in the First Round of the FA Cup (amateur and non-League clubs had long since been denied entry). I suggest therefore, that we do away with the Cup draw and just pair the pair.'

This unexpected, sensible suggestion was lost on a show of feet after a few sobering thoughts about sacrilege, tradition, and TV, had been scattered upon the assembly by the ever-ready secretary, but Colonel Moore was immediately on his feet again to press home another interesting point: 'If', he suggested with a faint trace of sarcasm, 'our two Third Division clubs should happen to be drawn against each other, what colours do the Association suggest they wear?'

The secretary gave his ruling:

'One team will wear striped shirts and white pants, the other white shirts and striped pants: team "A" will be composed of fair-haired players with blackened faces, and team "B" black-haired players with fair skin. And, in case any more silly questions are coming in from Colonel Moore, I will tell him that, should team "B" have any bald-headed

or Jamaican footballers, they will have to drop them from the side. Our primary object, gentlemen, all the time, must be to strive for the ideal contrasts for television, and if a couple of players' faces do not fit, then that is really just too bad.'

A number of written questions were then passed to the secretary for his 'off-the-cuff' answers. He rose to deal with them.

'As all these queries have been submitted anonymously, I will not mention the names of members who sent them in. I am asked: if next season's English international tour is to Panama and Mongolia as is proposed, is it reasonable to assume that these matches have been arranged because our selectors have never visited either country and they are going simply for the experience? The supposition is quite correct, in fact the questioner should have realized by now that these tours do an immense amount of good internationally. Why, I know of three cases where matches in Tobago, Las Vegas, and Sark have completely cured Council members of severe cases of gout, blood pressure, and alcoholic poisoning. It was established at a meeting in this very room two years ago, that foreign tours are arranged solely for the benefit of your Council.

'We shall certainly go to Panama and Mongolia, and I feel it would be a delightful gesture if, following the Panama game, we awarded Panama hats instead of international caps, to the players. Cheaper too.'

(Should anyone imagine some person, or persons, is talking through his, or their, Panama hat, or Panama hats, he, or they, is, or are, quite right.)

'Now I must thank someone for his well-meaning offer to supply, at little more than cost price, 200 gross of square balls—an offer inspired by a recent suggestion that FA coaches wanted players to use the square ball whenever possible. It is a nice thought, but, of course, quite ridiculous. The square ball, actually, is now out of date, but should this anonymous person wish to help our coaches, he might

care to manufacture a similar number of long balls, as we are now concentrating on these.

'The next suggestion may be anonymous, but I am sure we can all guess who was the inspiration behind it. A member of the Council is asking for longer studs in his block for the heavy grounds. This will be expedited, you have my promise.

'Finally gentlemen, I come to an odd request that, in view of the well-known and universally acknowledged legislative ability of this assembly, we should change our name from the FA to the Sweet FA, in honour of our delightful lady vice-president, Miss Fanny Adams. It is a charming suggestion, but I feel we must shelve it until such time as our stocks of headed notepaper have decreased to an economical level.'

Ruminating and cogitating about why on earth any individual should want to call his organization 'sweet', the secretary sank to his chair amid thunderous applause and cries of 'More, more, more'; but he was cheated of his encore when Colonel O. L. D. Moore sprang to his feet and, clasping his hands above his head, once more started to speak. . . .

'Finally, gentlemen, I come to an odd request that, in view of the well-known and universally acknowledged legislative ability of this assembly, we should change our name from the FA to Sweet FA, in honour of our delightful lady vice-president, Miss Fanny Adams'

Chapter Four

How to Start a Football Team
or
The First Stages of Insanity

PERHAPS, AFTER reading up to this point, the student may feel inclined to start a football team himself: the best advice he could be offered would be a consultation with a brain specialist, but should he persist, this chapter may, or may not, be of some help to him.

The first thing needed is a ground: it should be selected carefully, to conform with present-day English standards, and to achieve that end, the points which should be borne in mind are listed below:

(1) The ground must be practically inaccessible, meaning just about impossible to reach by normal means of public transport.

(2) It should be completely surrounded by houses and other buildings, so as to make further expansion impossible.

(3) There should be a gasworks, or railway station, somewhere close at hand, so that the field of play may be obscured from time to time by smoke and dust. (If a club has the benefit of a railway station, the occasional smoke screen can be utilized to sneak an unexpected goal—provided that players of the home team memorize the railway time-tables accurately.)

(4) There must be the minimum number of turnstiles, so as to make entry into the ground as difficult as possible.

(5) The stand should leak in a large number of places, so that in wet weather, the occupants have to go on to the terracing to keep dry.

(6) On no account must there be any refreshment or sanitary facilities.

The Playing Pitch. The playing pitch must be carefully prepared and looked after, bearing in mind that pitches generally seem to fall into categories governed by the division of the League in which the team is operating.

Category A—The First Division Type:
Pitch, when prepared, is very similar in texture and appearance to a bowling green (except between September and April).

Category B—The Second Division Type:
Prepared in the same fashion as (A) above, but the grass is allowed to grow to a height of 18 inches (except between September and April, when nothing could possibly grow to any height).

Category C—The Third Division (South) Type:
Composition to be 80 per cent mud and 20 per cent sand. Grass appears occasionally during the close-season, but, if recognized, is vigorously discouraged.

Category D—The Third Division (North) Type:
Sparsely scattered with grass, clover, and bindweed, plus a modicum of dandelion and burdock, which is necessary for irrigation, irritation or weed-killing. This flora survives, of course, only outside the white lines (green in China) surrounding the field of play, while inside the white lines (see above for China), there is no vegetation to desecrate the undulating mouse-coloured sod.

Addenda.—It is necessary to point out that the heavy grounds, so familiar a feature of the English soccer scene, are caused neither by heavy water nor by coffee beans. (On reflection, though, why shouldn't they be?)

The Team. Having obtained your ground, and prepared the playing pitch, the next item on the agenda is the assembly of a team. Recruitment at the Old Folks' Home, the Labour Exchange, the local branch of the Road-

sweepers' Union, and the nearest West Indian Reception Centre, should give you a team of average Third Division standard.

If, however, you aspire to the dizzy heights of Second, or even First Division football, you will have to rely entirely on imported players, and get the necessary licenses from the Min. of Lab., the Min. of Colonies and, if you require Chinese players, the Min of Nanking.[1]

By dint of much costly experimenting, it has been ascertained that the ideal blend for a football team includes roughly seven Hungarians, two South Africans, one Zulu, plus an Irish goalkeeper thrown in to amuse the spectators. If he is a heavy Irish goalkeeper, strong wing-halves are essential to throw him in when amusing spectators.

While on the subject of the players themselves, we would like to appeal for an improved standard of turn-out in the team. Footballers have often been described in the National Press (a wholly admirable institution) as artists, but it seems unnecessary to corroborate the comparison by copying the hair styles of the paint and palette fraternity.

Football players' hair seems to come in four sizes only; bald, long, very long, and 'hey-who-put-the-lights-out'.

The Officials. No team is complete without at least three officials—a manager, a coach, and a trainer. As practically every club in England refuses to employ a coach, this emphazises just how completely incomplete they all are.

The manager should either know nothing about football or have played previously for a London club—qualifications which are usually synonymous. If he has to combine the duties of manager and secretary, it is advantageous if he can read and write. Another requisite is that a good manager must always have an idea or 'Plan'—some special method of training or tactics which will put the club in the Second Division (if it is at present in the First Division).

[1] AUTHOR'S NOTE.—On reading that a second time, it seems either too subtle or too silly for the average reader, or director, so I will explain. The first two Mins are Ministries, the third is a Chinese gentleman.

The Coach should have been imported from somewhere like Rochdale *via* somewhere like Rumania, in which latter country he should have steered—a word so often applied, delightfully, to coaches—the Rumanians to a World Cup victory, an Olympic Games victory, and political asylum in Austria. With such an impressive tally of achievements, the coach must, on no account, be given any control.

It has long been maintained, wrongfully, that the job of the trainer is to train the team: this is, of course, absolute rubbish.[1]

'The trainer has one primary function. He must look up the times of trains for away matches, in case the club has no coach'

Actually the trainer has one primary function. He must look up the times of trains for away matches, in case the club has no coach. Having ascertained which is the best train, he then ensures that the goalkeeper and the centre-forward catch the wrong train, necessitating the enrolment of volunteers from the crowd to act as substitutes. This puts the home supporters in high good humour, and gets for the club that rare thing—a good name.

Having completed all the foregoing formalities, the next step is to get your team into the League—any League. You can hardly expect to creep into the Football League straight away, because that would be equivalent to signing on at the

[1] *Publisher's Note.*—Like everything else in this book.

Labour Exchange and being given an appointment as a Member of Parliament.

Once established comfortably in some such sedate selection as the Southern League, or Northern League, or even, in extreme cases, the Western League, it is taken as a matter of course that you must start making applications for entry into the Football League. If, after 35 years, this has brought no success, try changing the name of your club: this often works wonders.

If even the name-changing dodge does not work, you must adopt sterner methods, because, with apparently no vacancies in the Football League, there is nothing for it but to create some. Easily the most effective way of doing this is to employ a foreign power to send over a few planes and blast a couple of Third Division clubs out of existence.

Choose a couple that won't be missed by anybody. There are plenty of these; in fact, if you choose two really obscure clubs, the news may not become public for two or three years—by which time you will have nipped in to fill one of the vacancies.

A word of warning. It is advisable to make sure that you have at least an even chance of being elected to one of the League places, as nothing is more disheartening than to pay out good money for explosives and then see Peterborough United and Wigan Athletic reaping the benefit.

Fiddling with Finances. Once inside the Football League, you can sit back and wait for natural progress to take place, secure in the knowledge that, by this time, you may have made a large amount of money. It is equally on the cards that you may have lost a large amount of money, and this gives the average club director his one golden opportunity to shine in the cause of soccer, to emerge as the saviour and not the slaughterer of the side.

He waits until the bank balance approaches six figures, then puts all the money in the wife's name, and goes bankrupt. After repeating the operation half a dozen times—

provided there is no inconvenient interference from the Inland Revenue people—he should control enough teams to form his own League. He should also be the biggest importer of explosives in England, and is likely to be about 250 years old, but many directors consider it well worth the effort involved.

A quicker and easier way to make a fortune is to find a lad of 15 or thereabouts, teach him to kick with both feet and to use the right sort of hair cream, and in no time at all you will be able to sell him to a First Division club for £25,000.

In the event of your losing a large sum of money as you proceed along the team-building road, the following alternatives are open to you:

(1) Call a 'save-our-soccer-side' meeting in the town hall, and, at the conclusion of the meeting, sell shares in the club to several thousand members of the public.

(2) Persuade four or five well-known, and wealthy, gentlemen, to become directors of the club in exchange for a four-figure contribution to the club's well-being. Before persuading them, it is necessary, of course, to establish the complete absence of any footballing background among the prospective directors.

(3) Follow the disheartening example of you-know-who and become dishearteningly extinct.

NOTE TO ALL READERS.—If, upon reaching this point, you have read every sentence carefully and have not skipped one word, make an immediate appointment with one of those clever gentlemen in Harley Street.

Chapter Five

FA Continental Tour—1966

FOR SOME time it has been the custom for international footballers selected to travel abroad with the Football Association in the close-season to report in London about two weeks before leaving. This is not done just to ensure that all members of the party arrive in good time for the plane: it is thought to be beneficial if players train together before leaving ... although since the idea was introduced, tour results have steadily deteriorated, which may prove something. On the other hand, it may not.

On May 3rd, 1966, 22 players were summoned to London for special training, but on the morning of that day no fewer than 20 telegrams of apology arrived at FA Headquarters begging leave of absence. The figures were broken down (an unfortunately descriptive term) in the following way:

8 were unable to leave their businesses as they were preparing for the summer trade.

3 sent word from hospital that they were awaiting cartilage operations.

2 travelling(from Sunderland) said the FA cheap day ticket was not available on the railway on a Monday.

2 regretted that they had to assist their wives with the Monday wash.

3 were in Glasgow where they were playing for Scotland in an international match.

2 had given up football three years earlier, but said they were flattered to receive the invitations.

2 did not send telegrams and arrived for training.

Deciding that 2 out of 22 was better than none, the team selectors made up the party by including 20 reserve players

from London clubs. It is gratifying to record that all of the 17 selectors reported fit, and once they had booked in at the Dorchester Hotel while the players settled in at the YMCA, a motor coach containing 39 people—including two possible tour players—set out for the Arsenal ground at Tottenham.

The famous stadium seemed oddly quiet and deserted, but believing that this was evidence of the success of the FA 'hush-hush' training plans, the players went into their dressing-room to prepare.

On leaving the players' tunnel, they were shocked to see not a blade of grass on the pitch and three workmen busily digging the soil with forks. The workmen ceased digging long enough to inform the chairman of the selection committee that Arsenal were re-turfing their pitch, and any training done that morning would be done over their dead bodies. The selectors immediately called an emergency meeting on the cinder track to discuss the next move. The conversation went like this:

'If we can't play on the Arsenal ground, will someone suggest another suitable place for the work-out.'

'Why don't we try this Under Ground I've heard so much about?'

'With all due respect, I must point out that the Under Ground is in France . . . or it was during the war, anyway.'

'That's just where you're wrong—with all due respect. The Under Ground is at a place called Charing Cross, and we can be there in half an hour.'

A vote was taken, and by 16 votes to 1, it was decided to train at the Under Ground at Charing Cross so, thanking the trio of pitch diggers for their assistance, the party moved off by coach and escalator and started training at Charing Cross. This had its drawbacks, the chief of these being the high mortality rate among the players. No fewer than four were run over within half an hour because they were ill-advised enough to get caught at the intersection of the Bakerloo and Northern Lines while recovering the ball.

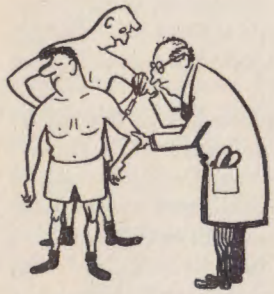
This was not quite as costly as it might have been because, on each occasion, the ball had been thrown back before the player reclaiming it was involved in the accident.

Other snags encountered at Charing Cross were posters on the platforms advertising jobs for porters and sweepers-up at a weekly wage of £18. This was too tempting for some of the players who, realizing they would be better off sweeping the platforms than travelling abroad with England, seized the chance while selectors were dozing, to exchange their track suits for London Transport uniforms—willingly surrendered by porters and sweepers-up who wanted to see the world.

This tactical switch meant that a number of footballers managed to get good jobs on the railway, while several railwaymen were in line for a tour abroad as international players. Training ended as soon as selectors awoke and, pausing only long enough to collect one of the older players from the booking office where he had been doing commendable business selling tickets at inflated prices, the party returned to the Dorchester and the YM.

The second morning of special training saw the arrival in London of most of the players who had sent telegrams the previous day: three had made their escape from hospital by knotting sheets and sliding down them from an upstairs window and, although one had broken his leg on landing, he pointed out that, as he was a right-winger and the broken limb was his left one, this would not affect his game in the least. One of the FA officials, who claimed to be a maths expert, calculated that most of the selected players were present, but there was still no sign of the three who had been playing in Glasgow. There followed a tug o' war between the FA and the SFA (in case readers might have other ideas, SFA means Scottish Football Association) and after a whole gaggle of emergency meetings, it was established that the three players selected by England, yet playing for Scotland, were actually born in Swansea . . . which, of course, made them eligible only for Ireland.

To make provision for players who had missed the opening day's training, the reserves from the London clubs had to be returned to their clubs—who were secretly hoping they had got rid of them permanently. Some of these players were quite indignant at being weeded out and invented what, to selectors, seemed a fantastic story about being promised trips to Europe when they had left London Transport.



'—a serum was administered which inoculated each player against writing a book'

Some sort of order was eventually restored, but there was a fresh panic when nobody could locate the England goalkeeper, Cyril Crossbar. After a search lasting 48 hours, a call to the Transport Lost Property Office in Baker Street, brought forth the good news that Cyril was operating, most successfully, a signal box at Lambeth North tube station. It was agreed that he should be released as soon as he had completed his current shift.

Astonishing as it may seem, the two weeks' training proceeded without further incident. In the mornings, players trained at a local sports ground 28 miles from their headquarters: after lunch, they were free to do as they pleased, as long as they spent at least three hours resting on their beds. There was a gay round of entertainment in the evenings, with officials seeing shows at the London Palladium, the Coliseum, the Prince of Wales Theatre and other such centres of culture, while players were taken to 14 different newsreel cinemas in 14 nights.

As usual, everyone had to be inoculated against the normal maladies and—an interesting point, this—for the first time a serum was administered which inoculated each player against writing a book.

Brought as near to peak form as is possible in the circumstances, the touring party arrived at London Airport to board their plane for Paris. Included were 15 players, 17 selectors, 5 guests of the FA, 12 Press men, 1 team manager-trainer-courier, and 2 comedians from a West End show. Two selectors complained as soon as they saw the aeroplane insisting that they had no intention of travelling in 'that infernal flying machine', and promising to rejoin the rest of their colleagues after crossing by boat. That left exactly 50 for the plane, which was a 40-seater specially chartered by the FA. An emergency meeting was called on the tarmac, and it was unanimously agreed that ten players should be left behind to cross on the Dover to Calais ferry.

On the surface such a compromise seemed ideal, but it proved quite disastrous. The ten players told to travel by sea were, by some oversight, left with neither tickets for the voyage nor money with which to purchase them: this involved them in the task of washing dishes on the boat to pay for their passages. After making two crossings in each direction, they arrived in Calais with high hopes of being able to make a dash for Paris in time for the first match of the tour. Just before leaving the boat, however, the purser decided that they would have to make just one more trip as dish-washers before they could work off the equivalent of their passage money.

In the circumstances, it is not surprising that the match, Holland *v* England in the People's Stadium, Paris, resulted in a draw 4—2 for Czechoslovakia. After all, England had the ideal excuse for losing this draw . . . only seven players had been available for selection, and the number had been made up by recruiting two reporters, the youngest selector —a stripling of 64, and a comedian.

Everyone seemed satisfied except the team manager-

trainer-courier, who was petty enough to suggest that, as four of the players in the match had taken the field drunk, he would, in future tighten up training regulations. He warned, 'I do not want to stop all your pleasures, but from this moment, you may only smoke and drink pineapple juice. On the following morning the team manager-trainer-courier was reprimanded by a selector who had overheard the instructions. This selector complained, 'I took your advice this morning as I wanted to act the same as the lads, but, after filling my pipe with pineapple juice, I couldn't light the filthy stuff and all I got for my pains was a mouthful of horrible-tasting muck'.

Parisian sight-seeing tours were organized and many postcards were sent home telling of the beautiful Kurfurstendam, the Kremlin and St Peter's. Three players were lost during a visit to the Bastille, but they were discovered locked accidentally in a cell the next morning, and were released just in time to join their colleagues preparing to leave Orly Airport.

Another touching airport reunion saw the arrival of the two non-flying selectors who, although disappointed at having missed the match in Paris, seemed happy enough when it was suggested that they should follow by train to the venue of England's next game—against Portugal in Venice.

On the day before the game there was much conjecture about the constitution of the England XI, and although the gentlemen of the Press had cabled home their usual stories that nine changes would be made, they sought official confirmation that two members of the team were to be retained. In the lobby of the best hotel in Venice, players, manager-trainer-courier, and Press foregathered to meet the selectors . . . but those very important personages were nowhere to be found. They were not in their rooms and nobody had seen them leave the hotel on looting expeditions. Next morning brought no news of the missing selectors, and pressed by the Press, the manager-trainer-courier decided to pick the team himself . . . a most unsatisfactory state of affairs.

The result of the match demonstrated the folly of allowing a team manager to pick his own team: England gained her biggest international victory for 10 years, beating the Portuguese by 2—0. It was a match characterized by few incidents, although Portugal were unlucky to lose three

'Oh! yes, and a pot of tea for eleven, please'

forwards (presumed drowned) after the England goalkeeper Cyril Crossbar moved his goals a few yards to the rear, and into the main street, which, as is not unusual in Venice, was quite wet. This manoeuvre also assisted the English defenders, who were playing in frogmen's flippers instead of football boots.

On returning victorious to their hotel, the players were gratified—or so they claimed—to discover that the missing selectors had turned up. It appears they had been jammed between the fifth and sixth floors for 48 hours, when a power cut had immobilized the lift in which they were descending.

The chairman of selectors was preparing to announce the team when his manager told him, 'You are too late. I picked it, we played the match, and won 2—0.' He was told, 'This is ridiculous. The result must be declared void. How could any match be official when we haven't even

selected the team?' Only the sight of the lift doors opening, and a Dracula-type attendant inviting him to go for a ride, persuaded the international official that it would be advisable to say no more and to make hurried plans for vacating Venice.

First, though, the banquet had to be attended. After all, there was much loot in store there, and no England selector worth his salt would dream of missing such a function. It was an excellent meal, and so was the loot, although there was a slight *contretemps* when the chairman of the English party attempted to leave the banquet with his present—a magnificent grandfather clock—hoisted on his shoulder. He was stopped at the door by an aged peasant who sported a long white beard, and was told, 'You have no right to take that clock with you.'

Startled at being thus accosted, he asked, 'Why not?'

'Because that clock belongs to me.'

'Who are you?'

'I'm grandfather.'

There seemed no answer to that one and the clock was reluctantly surrendered to grateful grandfather, who restored it to its place in his cottage after one of the Portuguese officials offered to give his English guest a £150 gold Swiss watch in place of the peasant's timepiece.

Pausing on the way to the airport for the latest news of the three (presumed drowned) Portuguese forwards, the English party set off next morning for the third match of their tour—against Bulgaria in Budapest. At Venice Airport, the two selectors who had been travelling overland, arrived to be told, once again, that they had turned up too late for the game. They vowed to make every effort to reach their next destination in time and, having waved off the main party, went into a huddle with a Venetian railway time-table.

In Budapest, a team tactics talk was held and at this historic meeting, a master plan to beat the Bulgarians was evolved. The manager-trainer-courier told his team, 'Our

Muck Park, famous ground of Gloggleton United FC, before the start of the mammoth ground improvement scheme.

Muck Park again . . . after the completion of the mammoth ground improvement scheme.

This is the FA Cup in all its glory ... as the Football Association like to see it.

This is the FA Cup being used for some other purpose by Master Roger Shackleton. The author believes the Football Association will not like to see it being used for this other purpose

If soccer spectators feel they have not been given value for money, they sometimes reveal their disappointment quietly to the management.

In the ultra-modern Football Association workshops, vast quantities of equipment are available for FA coaches.

Is this the average soccer spectator? No! It is not!

Footballers are given the best of everything, including speedy, comfortable, first-class travelling facilities for away matches. This type of vehicle transports such teams as Gloggleton United quickly and comfortably.

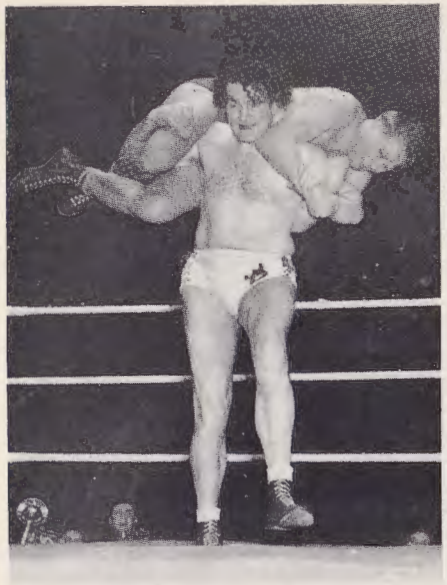
Before important Cup-ties, players are taken to holiday resorts, where they enjoy a quiet rest away from all normal domestic diversions.

Peter Doherty (manager of Doncaster Rovers) once used tailor's dummies to help his team in training. It is not true that the director of another Yorkshire club tried to outbid a men's outfitting establishment for the transfer of two of the dummies.

Wing-men need the speed of greyhounds. This is a winger Gloggleton United were hoping to sign, but his shooting was not good enough and the deal fell through.

Many footballers have to be taught how to kick correctly. So do chorus girls. These are chorus girls, and they look much more attractive than footballers.

The caption tells the story: 'Chumley, the Gloggleton United centre-forward, foils the Watchet Wanderers' centre-half, Herman Slot, in a desperate tussle for the ball—before firing in a tremendous shot which grazed the woodwork.'



This is a famous Irish sportsman stopping an opponent's progress. When tried in a recent League soccer match, similar tactics were surprisingly penalized by an over-zealous referee.

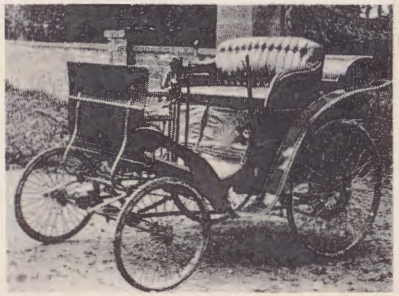
Off the field, footballers rely on the '3 D's' to keep them fit ... dominoes, darts and draughts.

Sometimes players ordered off the field are not entirely in agreement with the referee's verdict. For this reason, approximately two-thirds of the strength of the local constabulary always attend football matches. In this picture Turkish policemen are persuading a banished player that he ought to leave the field.

The Englishman abroad. It is often stated that England's international footballers do not enjoy their overseas tours. In the above picture a group of them are seen tolerating a recent one.

The foreigner here. It is also sometimes claimed that the great Hungarian, Russian and South American football teams do not relish playing under typical British conditions. Would anyone?

The foreigner abroad. In some countries the ball used is not of standard size, and is either too large or too small to be propelled by human beings. Horses (or ants) are then brought into service. These are not ants.



Before the war, professional footballers could afford only the oldest of motor cars for pleasure motoring. This one was owned by an international player who bought it on hire purchase for 10d. per week.

Since 1945, however, players' wages have rocketed, and it is not unusual for a goalkeeper to arrive at a match driving one of these up-to-date, streamlined vehicles.

A recent portrait of Colonel O. L. D. Moore, one of Soccer's virile young legislators. Colonel Moore excels at many sports, including shinty, knur and spell, and dominoes (as demonstrated here).

secret move to beat these Bulgars is quite a simple one, really. We'll play them at cricket . . . instead of football. The effect of this masterpiece of strategy was somewhat blunted when Cyril Crossbar enquired, 'Excuse me, but I was under the impression that we had been playing cricket all the time. Would it not be a better tactical move if we played football for a change?' Crossbar was suspended *sine die* for his suggestion.

It was reminiscent of an afternoon at Lords as the English team strolled out for the big game against Bulgaria, wearing white shirts and white flannels—the only difference being the large black numbers inscribed on the backs of the players' cricket shirts. This had been thought essential, as there was some sort of a ruling about numbering players, and selectors thought it should be adhered to.

Faced by such unorthodox tactics, Bulgaria never had a chance, and they were thoroughly whipped by an innings and two goals. It was indeed a triumphant English party which set off by air for home, having left a message giving the match result for the benefit of the pair of overlanders who were due to arrive barely an hour after the main party departed.

During the journey home, the fifteen flying selectors spent the time discussing all they had seen on their trip, and comparing the loot each had gathered during it. It was agreed that they would all try to persuade their clubs to install floodlights at the earliest possible opportunity—so impressed had they been with the night clubs they had visited on the Continent.

Occupied with such pleasant meditations, London Airport was reached swiftly and smoothly, but there was nothing swift or smooth about the passage through the customs shed. It was here that Cyril Crossbar was heard protesting to the manager-trainer-courier: 'The season is finished, my training is finished and I flatly refuse to have anything to do with these Customs and Exercises.' He was again suspended *sine die*.

E

A touching incident occurred at Waterloo Air Terminal when the two train-and-boat selectors caught up with their colleagues for the first time on the tour. They thanked the players for playing so well, thanked the manager for supplying them with such excellent railway time-tables, thanked the other selectors for passing on match results in each city visited, and promptly suggested making 10 changes for England's next match.

A few weeks later the official tour report was smuggled out of Lancaster Gate by a journalist who had called to repay some money borrowed from the Football Association while on tour. The report is reproduced here:

'The International Committee of the Football Association report with pride the most successful tour ever undertaken by an English team. Three matches were played, two were won, and one was lost. Surprisingly enough, none was drawn.

'Practically all those who set out on tour returned safely, although it is to be regretted that three selectors died of old age on the long journey between London Airport and Waterloo Air Terminal. Wreaths have been sent to their relatives. Other casualties included an outside-right with a broken left leg. He was unlucky enough to break his right leg also, so after an emergency meeting, it was decided to shoot him. Four selectors tried to accomplish this act of mercy, but after they had all missed, a player had to be brought in to do the shooting. No wreath has been sent to relatives.

'One player, who never at any time seemed capable of playing football at international level, showed a strange reluctance to mix with his colleagues and he left the party to join the Bulgarian State Railways claiming that he should never have left Charing Cross in the first place. This odd statement conveyed nothing to your committee.

'As the net profits from the three games amounted to £70,000, it was agreed that a special bonus of £10 should be paid to the players. When shared among them, each

player received a little more than 10 shillings—admittedly a large amount for a footballer, but nevertheless well earned. Little gratitude was shown by the team upon receiving their bounty, and even less was shown when the players were each handed illuminated addresses to commemorate the tour. One went so far as to tell your chairman, "I've got better addresses than this in every town from Bootle to Budapest." The player was suspended *sine die*.'

Chapter Six

The Men in Control *or* 'Pass the hatchet, Charlie'

EVERY GAME of football which takes place comes under the direct jurisdiction of three gentlemen—often called other things—known respectively, but never respectfully, as the referee (also umpire, arbiter, or gaffer) and the linesmen (also semaphorists). There are two of the latter, making with the referee, a total of three in all. QED.

In East Germany, where there is apparently a shortage of manpower (*Eng. trans.*—comrades), there is another system in operation. This involves the use of two referees and no linesmen, with each referee positioning himself on one side of the pitch . . . but never both on the same side. Thus our equation now becomes $2 + 0 = 2$, and as that is one fewer than three, there is a saving in manpower of one. This line-patrolling system was once tried out in England but it proved most unsuccessful: chief objectors were the referees themselves who repeatedly complained about being placed within throwing distance of the crowd—a fact of which the spectators took due advantage. By the way, there is no foundation to the tale that this East German system originated in China. Following a thorough search in the archives, we have proved conclusively that in China the accepted method of control involves the presence of two linesmen actually on the field of play, and one referee patrolling all four lines.

It is essential to bring home forcibly, to all newcomers to soccer spectating, the fact that they should not place too much reliance on idle terracing gossip about referees and their antecedents. It is likely that much of the comment is untrue, and it is certain that some of it is impossible.

Similarly, when refereeing in England for the first time

yourself, it is inadvisable to follow blindly (an appropriate word, that) all directions received from the terraces. You may find yourself in one or two rather inaccessible places.

Once a novice spectator becomes an accepted member of the crowd, or, better still, enrols in the local Supporters' Club, he will be entitled—even encouraged—to join in the sport of referee-baiting. This is a very simple part of the duties of a spectator and consists of entertaining your friends by informing the referee, so that he has no doubts on the subject, that he is:

(*a*) Blind.
(*b*) Deaf.
(*c*) Dumb.
(*d*) Incapable.
(*e*) Drunk.
(*f*) Blind, again.

To be recognized as a top-class referee-baiter, however, you must find some new and scintillatingly original methods of expressing these mundane faults. In this respect the section of Chapter 8 (which follows Chapter 7) devoted to referees, may be a great help. Or, on the other hand, it may not.

There is little to be written about linesmen. They can be summed up as miniature referees exercising control over a straight line (*Geom. def.*—the shortest point between two distances), instead of a rectangle (*Geom. def.*—four lines bounded on all sides by open spaces in every direction). A linesman may, therefore, be described as lineal, and a referee as cubic. Or, on the other hand, they may not.

In concluding this chapter, we must, in fairness to the men in control, admit that there are times when the officials manage to emerge as the star turns of the afternoon. During a match at Muck Park, home of Gloggleton United, the referee was misguided enough to attempt to stop, with the rear part of his head, a bullet-like clearance from United's right-back 'Lefty' Cackhand. Luckily one of the linesmen was public-spirited enough to step into the breach and

apply the whistle: his space on the line was taken over by a large florid-faced gentleman, who proceeded to gallop up and down—and occasionally down and up—immaculately attired in a top hat, morning coat, pin stripe trousers, spats, and football boots borrowed from the trainer of the home team. This afforded spectators even more cause for hilarity than the sight of the referee, by then quite dead, being taken into the players' tunnel on a stretcher.

'—The referee was misguided enough to attempt to stop, with the rear part of his head, a bullet-like clearance from United's right back'

No suspicions were roused when this substitute linesman flagged for three penalty-kicks for the home team, and also gave the forwards of the away team offside on each occasion they crossed the centre line. However, following an accident caused by the studs of his borrowed boots catching in his watch chain, a cascade of miniature whiskey bottles and six full length cigars (Corona-Colchesters) spilled from the pockets of his morning coat on to the touchline. It was then discovered that the volunteer with the flag was none other than the chairman of the home team, Gloggleton's leading greengrocer, Col. E. Flower.

NOTE TO ALL READERS.—If you consider any story in this chapter pointless, just compare it with the rest of the book.

Chapter Seven

Board Meeting, 1966

SHOULD THE reader ever meet about a dozen prosperous-looking gentlemen walking along the street, each with a plank upon his shoulder, it is possible they are going to a board meeting at the local football club. In ancient times the boards were used to batter the lives out of any players who might have played badly on the previous Saturday: in 1966, however, such barbarous practices have no place in soccer—instead players who have not measured up to board standards are merely reprimanded and cut down to half wages.

There were 12 directors present at the board meeting about to be described, 12 being a nice handy number as it gave each director the chance to nominate a player for the first team, not forgetting the 12th man. First there was a brief check-up. 'Is the green-grocer present? Has the window-cleaner arrived? We only need the scrap-iron merchant to turn up and we can open the meeting.'

One director, whose wet fish business was prospering to such an extent that he rarely had time to spare for board meetings, was at once on his feet to ask, 'Shall we sack the manager?' In normal circumstances this would have been a reasonable request, but the chairman, Mr Austin Morris, a motor-car manufacturer, put the brakes on the suggestion when he told the fish merchant, 'We sacked him last week . . . as you would have known if you'd turned up for the meeting.' It was obviously unfair to sack a new manager after only seven days, so having decided to give him another week's grace, the business of selecting the team for the next match came up for discussion.

Mr Morris, withdrawing a crumpled piece of notepaper

from his waistcoat pocket and tearing it deliberately into shreds, announced, 'That is, or rather was, the manager's team, and he would think he had a very strange board if we selected the same men as him. Now, as you all know, we were beaten 7—1 last week and, although there was obviously nothing wrong with the defence, I think the team need at least five changes in the attack.'

The fish merchant, who was finding his non-attendance at meetings a grave handicap, had to ask, 'What is the defence, and what is the attack?' Not a sound was heard. He repeated his question, 'What is the defence and what is the attack?' At last the silence was broken by the chairman. 'Well, gentlemen, if we are going to get too technical about picking the blinking team, I suppose we must send for the manager.' Striking a nearby gong, he sat down to await the pleasure of the club manager, a famous old player who had been capped 15 times as an English international full-back before being condemned to the serfdom of a managerial career. The manager explained in words of one syllable, which were the only words he knew, the difference between attack and defence, before retiring hastily to his cubby hole where he was deliriously joyful to reflect that he had not been summoned for sacking. Leaving this miserable specimen in his tranquillity, let us return to the board room, where the tried and trusted method of team selection was about to begin. 'Now gentlemen, whose hat are we going to pick the names from this week?' A shiny bowler was thrust forward and, with the club secretary ready to note the names, Mr Morris started drawing slips of paper.

'Ponsonby, Freebody, Debenham, Schultz, Schmidt, Featherstonehaugh, Trish, Trash, Six-and-seven-eighths, Jones. . . .' Having drawn only ten names, Mr Morris turned on the secretary to ask for an explanation, having already decided, however, that he would sack him, explanation or no.

'My explanation, sir? I have none. I cut twelve slips of paper, which should have given you a full team plus one

reserve. Can we not have a thorough search of the lining of the hat?'

This idea was acted upon, with amazing results. No fewer than five slips of paper bearing players' names were discovered. Two of the players had been signed on in 1965, and had often wondered why they had never been selected for duty in any of the club's teams. This was all the more astonishing when one considers that the hat with the names in the lining had been cleaned only a few weeks previously by another director . . . a hatter by trade. 'You must have made a really thorough job of the cleaning', sneered its owner.

The members of the board decided that the two players who had been unemployed for a year should play for the first, second, and third team whenever possible during the remainder of the season, so as to work off the football they owed the club.

One player, whose name had been lost in the hat lining, was then selected for the missing outside-left position, but that still meant there were two players left for the job of twelfth man. Obviously the situation was still not quite satisfactory.

Not for the first time, the alert Mr Austin Morris put his finger unerringly on the trouble. 'Will somebody tell me who signed this centre-forward, Six-and-seven-eighths? It wasn't anyone on the board. If this new manager has been signing players without telling us, he'll have to go.'

The secretary who, by now, realized this was to be his last meeting, nervously chewed the end off his pencil and mumbled, 'I think the chairman has drawn the hat size instead of a piece of paper.' He was thanked for his help, given a week's notice, and evicted from the board room. The team was then finally picked.

Next business at the meeting concerned the possible recruitment of new players. Mr Herbert Pane, the window-cleaner, was on his favourite subject. He said, 'I have seen a centre-forward playing for the famous Scottish Junior

club, Maxwelton Braes, and I am certain he's just the man for us.'

'Is he two-footed?' asked the knowledgeable Mr Morris.

'Of course he is, Mr Chairman. Surely you don't imagine I would recommend a player who has suffered amputation or a player who has three feet?'

The chairman, however, was determined to resist any plunge, no matter how gentle, into the transfer market. 'I see nothing wrong with our present centre-forward. He's got one foot he's never even used yet. Besides that, we've got an inside-left who hasn't started using either foot, although he's good with his head. There's plenty of good football left in those two to start with.'

'I'm sorry you feel that way about my suggested signings', said Mr Herbert Pane, 'although I had already tapped the player in question and I doubt whether we could get him. He had the effrontery to ask me for the town hall, and as you all know so well, we've already promised that to the goalkeeper we're signing tomorrow.'

Mr Pane had not finished speaking about his transfer activities. 'I was told to go and watch a wing-half at Queen's Park Rangers, a lad called Guinness, who was supposed to be a very strong player. I have submitted my expenses for the journey to Hampden Park, the famous ground of Queen's Park Rangers, but as Guinness was not playing in the match there, I realized his name had been changed to fool the scouts. McStout was the Queen's Park Rangers' right-half, and he was obviously my man. At half-time, hoping to beat all the other club representatives, I went to see the club manager, and off my own bat, offered him a substantial three-figure fee for the player. The manager of this team was most discourteous; he told me some cock-and-bull story about all his players being amateurs, claiming that his club had never sold any player to any club, and they had no intention of starting now.

'Gentlemen, I could not sign McStout, but on the same day I think I justified my £23 4*s* 8*d* expense account,

because I spotted the most commanding footballer I've seen in years. His name was Bond, he was dressed entirely in black, and he was so much in charge of the whole business, he actually had time to blow a whistle as he ran around. Let me bid for this Bond. He would be a wonderful acquisition.'

The meeting unanimously decided to make an offer for Bond, providing it had first been ascertained that he could play requests on his whistle.

The moment of truth, perhaps the first truthful moment, had arrived at our board meeting: the next item on the agenda was the allocation of the club's share of FA Cup Final tickets for Wembley. A registered parcel, neatly tied with string, and untidily splotched with sealing wax, was held aloft by Mr Austin Morris in a manner suggestive of a black magic devotee offering up the living sacrifice at the altar of evil. The synonym is not out of place.

The High Priest (sorry, Chairman) told his colleagues, 'In this enchanted package, which you will observe is unopened and which has in no way been tampered with, are 350 tickets. Those 350 precious pieces of pasteboard are our passports to building contracts, wine and spirit orders, new grocery customers, and priceless commercial contacts. Every man here will be entitled to count the tickets. Let the reckoning begin.'

It did—and each director arrived at a different total. They decided, five hours later, to accept Mr Morris's assurance that there were 350 tickets.

The chairman said, 'I think the fairest way to look after our loyal supporters, staff and players would be to give them 50 tickets and keep the odd 300 for ourselves. I realize we are making a big sacrifice, but we should be able to manage on a bare 300.'

Mr Pane challenged the suggested share-out. 'Why should we, the directors, make such a sacrifice? I would like to move the amendment that the board keep 325, and pass on 25 to the players, staff, and public.' The amendment was carried.

Mr Morris warned the meeting, 'This club always has a good name when it comes to the treatment of players. There are 32 players on our books, and even if 20 of the 25 tickets went to the dressing-room, that would still mean 12 players had been given a raw deal. Rather than lose our good name, I think we should put 12 players on the transfer list.' This excellent compromise was accepted.

The glorious carve-up continued as Mr Morris went on, 'There are 12 directors and 325 tickets. Now 12 goes into 325 exactly 27 times, with one over, and, as chairman, I get the odd ticket.' So saying, he slipped a fifty-shilling one into his pocket. He then made a surprising suggestion that, exercising the chairman's prerogative, he wanted the room cleared so that he could have a private discussion with his vice-chairman Mr Pane.

Left on their own, the whispering began: 'Look here, Herbert. Old Obadiah Fosdyke is turned 97, and he didn't look any too well today. He's not sure to last until the Cup Final, so if we can help him on his way—just accelerate the inevitable, you know, we could divide 11 into 325, not 12. Pane was enthusiastic, and willingly agreed to take co-director Fosdyke round the local golf course twice a day for the next week or two, relying on the North East wind and the April showers to complete the job.

Balloting for the four tickets allocated to season ticket holders followed, and once again, the bowler hat was used. 'The first lucky man', said Mr Austin Morris, 'is Mr Israel O'Reilly who gets a 3/6*d* ticket. Next is Mr Six-and-seven-eighths. No, I beg your pardon. That scoundrel of a secretary has put back the hat size. Now a 3/6*d* ticket for Sam Slocombe. The third for Joshua Makepeace who, I am pleased to note, is one of my best customers. The fourth for Fred Freebody. Isn't that our right-back? Curse that secretary: he wants to get Freebody into the team for Saturday week.'

Somehow or other, the four season ticket holders were eventually named, and Mr Morris sat down, at the same time accidentally spilling half a dozen tickets out of an inside pocket. He retrieved them before anyone noticed.

The final item on the agenda concerned economy measures. The club had fallen on hard times: only £100 a week was being shown as profit, and some of the dead wood had to be cut away.

There were suggestions about reducing wages to rock bottom, but that had been done in the previous economy campaign. Another idea was the introduction of part-time players. This was thrown out, because most of the board had read in their newspapers that part-time football was a bad thing. It was left to Mr Pane to propose the simplest and most effective way of cutting down expenses. He said, 'Our assistant-manager Jack Bone has been 53 years with the club and he can't be of much use to us now. If we sacked him we could save his salary, and that's worth £7 a week to us.' Jack Bone was thereupon dispensed with.

After a few whiskies and soda, our board meeting broke up. All directors were content with the way things had gone, even though it rather perturbed two who happened to have consciences, to notice, as they left the board room, the manager and the trainer tossing up for the single ticket which had been allocated to the staff.

Chairman Austin Morris had the last word, as he whispered in the trainer's ear, 'When you give the players their tickets, explain to them why there are only 3/6*d* ones available. It is a bad thing for athletes to sit down too long, and we think their fitness will benefit if they are standing in the open air. Oh, and by the way, tell them there will be serious trouble if any player sells his ticket for more than £3. We want no profiteering in this club.'

Just ten minutes later, the stadium was deserted. The bustling activity of the board room had faded away. Only an impenetrable fog of cigar smoke remained as evidence of the momentous decisions taken there by the great men of soccer on that day.

Suddenly the fog was pierced, the silence was shattered.

A semi-delirious individual staggered into the board room, got down on his hands and knees, and with eager searching fingers, started to explore the Axminster. Every few seconds he would moan, 'I've only got 14 tickets. Someone's done me for the other 13. Nobody will believe me, and they'll all say I've flogged them already. How can I tell 13 customers they can't have tickets? I'm ruined . . . ruined . . . ruined. . . .'

We should sympathize with this poor, unfortunate, specimen of a football director. He had always played the game (not football of course), and had never raised his voice out of turn at the meetings. He was content to accept the majority verdict in all matters; he took nothing but bare expenses, clothing allowance, family entertaining, and complimentary tickets as his recompense for being on the board. He was the ideal soccer director in every way. He knew nothing. He did nothing. He said nothing.

And on this most important day—Cup Final ticket carve-up day—one of his colleagues on the board had 'done him' for 13 tickets. Could any man sink lower? Not without getting down on hands and knees to explore the Axminster . . . knowing all the time, within his heart, that the only ticket he was likely to find would bear the inscription 'Six and seven-eighths'.

Chapter Eight

Glossary of Useless Phrases

Part the First. Some expressions which are in everyday use.

About the weather

It is raining cats and dogs.
It is very foggy.
It is snowing.
There is a severe gale blowing.
What is that big round yellow object up in the sky?

About the home team

They have as much idea as a bunch of two-year-olds.
They are a bunch of two-year-olds.
The centre-forward is drunk.
The outside-right has two left feet.
The goalkeeper is not fit to play in the Dustmen's League.
I have supported this team for more than 30 years.
Why!

About the visiting team

Boo!

About the referee

Why do you not swallow your whistle? (*Milwall trans.*—Swollered yer pea, ref?)
Your hair is getting in your eyes. (This is reserved for bald-headed referees.)
Wait a moment and I will fetch you a pair of National Health spectacles.
Have you forgotten to bring your ear trumpet?

Why do you not play centre-half for them?
He is getting his white stick and his guide-dog on Tuesday.
Your mother and father were not legally married.

About the linesman

May I have permission to instruct you as to the disposal of your flag?
Please return to King's Cross where the 5.35 awaits your signal.

During the game

Goal.
No goal.
Offside.
Onside.
Penalty.
Windy. (*N.B.*—This word is not employed in its meteorological sense.)
Hand ball.
Netball.
Boo!

After the game

I have seen better matches played by schoolboys.
What an easy way to make £15 a week.
I could do better myself.
I have done better myself.
I am never coming to this ground again.
See you next week.

Before a mid-week game

(To the boss): I am burying my grandmother this afternoon.

During the same afternoon game

They ought to bury each of these 22 performers.

The following morning

It was a lovely funeral, sir: there were forty thousand people present.

At a Chinese match

Confucius, he say: 'Regret inability of honourable defending gentlemen to remove obnoxious round object from honourable penalty area.'

Part the Second. Expressions heard around football grounds are very hackneyed and stereotyped, and may not appeal to the intellectual football fan (*i.e.* one who also attends cricket). The following more delicately-phrased insults, to hurl at all and sundry will stamp the orator as an individual of great intellect. In order to obviate any misunderstanding, the normal phraseological translation is given in brackets.

Exploit the vectorial void (use the open space).[1]

Apply your pedal extremity with explosive velocity, Leonardo, his respiratory system is still in continuous operation. (Kick him again, Len, he's still breathing.)

Dispossess your antagonists of their vision by employing systematic theoretical knowledge. (Blind 'em with science.)

Retain the spheroidal dressed animal hide in proximity to the terrestrial sub-strata. (Keep the ball on the ground.)

Apply cranial directivity in the direction most conducive to undisputed removal from the restricted area of operations. (Head the ball out of play.)

[1] *Author's note.*—See more about this in Chapter 9.

Chapter Nine

Using the Open Space[1]

[1] Publisher's note: This missing chapter has nothing at all to do with any similar missing chapter in any book written by any similar author.

Chapter Ten

Radio and TV Interference

DURING RECENT years, a profound influence has been exercised over football by the medium commonly known as broadcasting (*Eng. trans.*—shattering the peace of the home) and television (*Eng. trans.*—one-eyed monster). This influence has provided soccer with such a welter of free publicity and misguided recommendation, that it is naturally banned almost entirely by the Football League. Most football commentators are very efficient at their jobs, whatever their jobs may be, but there are a few who seem quite unable to put over a mental picture of what is going on.

Take, for instance, the recent commentary on the friendly match between Gloggleton United FC and the famous Irish team Ballybunion Brewery FC. (You're going to take it whether you like it or not.) At great inconvenience, and no little expense, we have been able to obtain the original script of this broadcast, and are now about to reproduce it in full (*Millwall trans.*—the whole perishin' lot).

To confuse the issue even more than necessary, here is how the teams lined up:

GLOGGLETON UNITED (pink and purple)—Longbottom; Sidebottom, Winterbottom; Freeman, Hardy, and Lotus; Fotheringshawe, Smith, Chumley, Peabody and Peabody.

BALLYBUNION BREWERY (black and fawn, with a ruby glint).—O'Hara; O'Flynn, O'Leary; Finnegan, Flanagan and Branegan; Hoyle, Doyle, Boyle, Coyle and Foyle.

REFEREE (Neutral).–Mr Padraig O'Houlihan (Ballyduff).

The Commentary. 'Good afternoon everybody, and a very good afternoon it is, too. (*Sound of thunder in the background.*) This is your commentator, 'Cess' Poole, com-

mentilating on the match at Muck Park, Gloggleton, between the local United and Ballybunion Brewery FC, the popular and, in fact, world-famous, team from, er . . . (*rustle of paper in the background*), ah, yes!—from Ireland. They are an Irish team.

'On this beautiful afternoon (*sound of rain beating on the roof*), the first thing you will want to know is the score. Ah yes, the score. Well, there isn't any. Any score, I mean. In other words neither side has scored goals at either end.

'Listen to the sound as the crowd roars (*silence*)—that's because Fotheringshawe has the ball. No, it's Smith. Or is it Peabody? Ah, I see—it's Chumley all the time. Grand fella, Smith, y'know (*tremendous cheers in the background*). Came from Alloa three years ago, and has made quite a name for himself since. Wt. 15 st. 4 lb., ht.—ah, no! you wouldn't be interested in that. Married a local girl and got three lovely children—two boys and a girl. No, two boys and . . . ah, well! it doesn't matter; I expect Smith knows. By the way if you heard some cheers a few minutes ago, they were for Chumley. He scored a goal.

'That means, of course, that there isn't any no score no more. Sorry, any more. My word, what a lovely day it is here. (*Sound of hailstones ricocheting off the wall.*)

'Now here's a chance for Ballybunion. By jove! this is exciting. (*Sound of liquid being consumed.*) Doyle's given it to Boyle, who passes to Foyle, who kicks it to Hoyle. By jove! this is exciting (*hiccup*). Hoyle has got a wonderful chance, he can't miss. He's coming down the wing, having beaten first one man, then another, then another: only the Gloggleton goalkeeper stands between Hoyle and a goal as he comes boring into the penalty area. Oh! . . . tragedy! The elastic in his shorts has broken, and he's running across the field holding his reputation in his right hand. Now Hoyle has disappeared into the tunnel. By jove! that was exciting.

'Now here's Peabody with the ball. I see him foil Foyle and flatten Flanagan: real idol of the crowd is Peabody. (*Sound of booing and falsetto voice advising—"Go 'ome to Mum"*).

My word, it's incredible, it's amazing, in fact nothing like this has ever happened in a game of football before. You wouldn't believe it even if you saw it. Peabody has actually . . . (*atmospherics drown commentator for a few seconds*) . . . wasn't it.

'Now, according to my watch, the teams have 25 minutes and 18 seconds left for play. Oh, thank you. Sorry, listeners, they have 18 minutes and 25 seconds to play. What? Yes, of course, but not much water. Anyway, there cannot be much more than 18 minutes left. I say, what a lovely goal—best I've seen all season. Winterbottom and Sidebottom between them have turned it past Longbottom their own goalkeeper as neatly as you please. Absolute picture goal. (*Companion mumbles.*) Ha, ha. Very rich, that. Bottoms up to you, too. Wasn't that an amazing goal, old boy? (*Voice:* "*Yes.*")

'In case I haven't mentioned it yet, it's a beautiful afternoon. Yes, a beautiful afternoon. Really perf . . . (*sound of loud crash*). Oh! my heavens! the roof's fallen in. It's pelting down with rain, we're flooded out, I'm drowning . . . help . . . help . . . HELP.'

Three minutes' silence followed this disastrous ending to the commentary, and then the voice of an announcer was heard: 'We regret that owing to a technical hitch, we are unable to continue our commentary from Muck Park. Normal service will be resumed as soon as possible. Here, instead, are a few gramophone records starting with, rather coincidentally, Bach's Fugue in A Minor for piccolo and flute.'

Live—a rather ill-chosen adjective—commentaries are not the only contributions made by the broadcasting people to the smooth-running and well-being of soccer: also eagerly lapped up (latest listener research figure 321) are the inside stories affecting matches, which go on the air either at about 7.30 on Friday evenings or at about 1.00 p.m. on Saturdays. As with 'Cess' Poole's commentary, a recording has been obtained of one of these scintillating

surveys of soccer, and the author is happy to pass it on to his readers—or if interest has faded, as he fears—to his reader.

The compere of the programme, who is a Welshman domiciled in Shepherds Bush and the proud possessor of an Arizona accent, introduces the tit-bit of his sporting *potpourri* on the following lines:

'And now, you guys, to get an earful of today's big ball games, I'm gonna hand you over to Mike Monosyllable. Take it away, Mike Monosyllable.' (It is a matter for regret that this advice is never taken in its literal sense.)

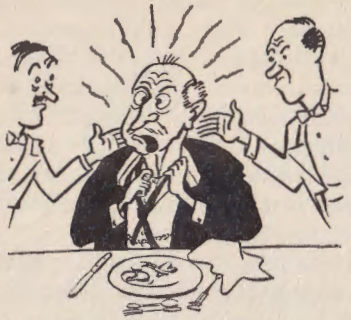
'Good afternoon, football fans. Today, Saturday, 29th October, 1949, we have a feast of fine football fare for frenzied fans. The League programme is chock-a-block with interesting encounters which will have a big bearing on the destination of the League honours list next May.

'I shall be watching the tense top-of-the-table tussle between Arsenal and Gloggleton United at Highbury Stadium, London, N.5.' (Nobody ever seems to notice that, in his search for the best match of the day, Mike Monosyllable always goes either to Arsenal or Tottenham Hotspur, depending on which side is at home—a convenient arrangement, as he lives in the Seven Sisters Road.)

'Arsenal should win, because having lost 14 games in succession, the sequence is due to end. Notwithstanding that, of course, it should be borne in mind that Gloggleton, for whom a new centre-forward Charles John Matthews, signed last week for £75,000 from Bilston Borough, makes his debut, will be all-out to avenge a 1929 defeat at the hands of the same opponents—the only occasion on which they have been defeated. By the famous Gunners it is sure to be a top-of-the-table tussle, with no holds barred and no quarter asked or given.

'The clash at the Rosethorns between Birmingham Villa and Aston Albion assumes more than usual insignificance in view of the desperate positions of these relegation-haunted clubs. A last-minute accident sustained by the Aston Albion

chairman, who was inadvertently served a player's lunch and afterwards choked to death, has upset the away team,



'—the Aston Albion chairman was inadvertently served a player's lunch and choked to death'

but his replacement, the club vice-chairman, has sportingly agreed to close his green-grocery business for the afternoon, and I know he will not let the side down. In this tense bottom-of-the-table tussle, I must take . . . (*pause of never less than* 15 *seconds accompanied by more sounds of rustling paper*) . . . Bournemouth, Poole and Weymouth Wanderers to win at Billericay against the local United. I beg your pardon. I seem to have turned over two pages of, pages of, pages of, pages of, pages of . . .'

(AUTHOR'S NOTE.—At this stage our recording seems to have settled into a rut, thus providing merciful relief for myself, my publisher, my reader—if he's still with me—and, it seems, Mike Monosyllable.)

Nowadays steam radio's coverage of sport comes a very poor second best to the service provided by television. Think of it, on a Saturday night, only eight and a half hours after the big games have been played, it is possible to sit down in the comfort of one's armchair, and re-live those tense top-of-the-table tussles, wondering perhaps, how we did not get wet during the game, with so much snow affecting the filmed record. And how relaxing it is, in these days of hustle and bustle, to applaud the commentator for the nonchalant way he allows the film to dash on its way,

while his commentary persists about twenty seconds behind the vision.

Interspersed with these permanent records from the big games, are snappy, informative, off-the-cuff interviews which fairly sizzle as tension mounts and the action-packed repartee is flung from inquisitor to inquisitive. Such an interview took place recently on NBGTV, and although much of the effect is inevitably lost without the picture, the following reproduced dialogue will help to put readers in the picture, even without the picture, if you can picture what is meant:

'And now we go over to our Manchester studio where Sinclair Slopp is waiting to interview Charlie Chumley, the dashing centre-forward of Gloggleton United, who scored three goals for his club this afternoon. Come in Manchester.'

'How do you view, doers. This is Sinclair Slopp and I have with me Charlie Chumley of Gloggleton United. Now tell me Charlie, did you enjoy the game this afternoon?'

'Er . . . er . . . it were a right good game, it were, it were.'

'I see. And what did you think of the Preston North End scrum-half?'

'Scrum-half?'

'Yes, the big, tall player, who followed you all over the field, you know.'

'He were the centre-half, not the scrum-half.'

'Were he? Was he? Of course, wrong game again. Oh well what did you think of the Preston North End centre-half, to correct myself?'

'Er . . . well . . . er . . . he were a right good player.'

'Good, it's nice to know players are saying nice things about other nice players. Tell me, Charlie, what do you think about your club's chances in the FA Cup this year? I mean you've reached the fourth round, I see.'

'Er . . . er . . . er . . . well, we're ummm . . . we're not good enough really. We should never have got past Third Round, never mind Fourth. Er . . . still you never know.

There are so many bad teams about we might even reach the Fifth Round. That's the one after the fourth, isn't it, Mr Slopp?'

'Yes, Charlie.'

'On the other hand if we get many more referees like we had today we could win the Cup.'

'Referees? Apologize for that slip of the tongue, please Charlie. Nothing controversial on NBGTV, please.'

'Er . . . umm . . . sorry.'

'Just one other question before you go, Charlie Chumley. Have you any personal ambitions . . . any mark you hope to make on this great game?'

'Er . . . er . . . I'd love to play for me country.'

'You'd like to be an English international, would you?'

'Well, no, not exactly, you know, you see I come from Madagascar. That, that's an island, is Madagascar. Oh I'd love to play for Madagascar, but they don't play much international football there. They've only had two matches in the last 50 years, and I missed both of them because I was injured. But I'd love to play for me country, Madagascar. That's me country, you know, Madagascar. It's an island you know.'

'Yes, Charlie, it's certainly an island. And have you any ambitions to win an FA Cup medal, or League medal?'

'Well . . . er . . . er . . . you know, people tell me these medals are not fetching much these days, even the best of them are not worth much more than about twenty-five bob, so what do I want to worry about that for? I mean . . . er . . . er . . . what's his name, Shackleton, he wrote his book and he put us all wise, you know. He told us that the honour didn't count for a thing and . . . and . . . and . . . it was up to us to get everything we could out of football and put nothing back in, and that was the best way to go about it, and we've been doing exactly that ever since, and that's the way it's going to be. . . .

'All right, Charlie Chumley. Sorry to interrupt. Back to the studio in London.'

Chapter Eleven

FA Bulletin—1966

No book on soccer would be complete—especially this one—without some mention being made of the official Football Association publication, the *FA Bulletin*. This journal is sometimes jokingly referred to as the 'Sweet FA Bulletin'—a title inspired by the wealth of useful soccer information hidden between its covers and by the Association's delightful vice-president, Miss Fanny Adams. It is the author's intention to review a copy of the *FA Bulletin*, chosen at random, dated August 1966.

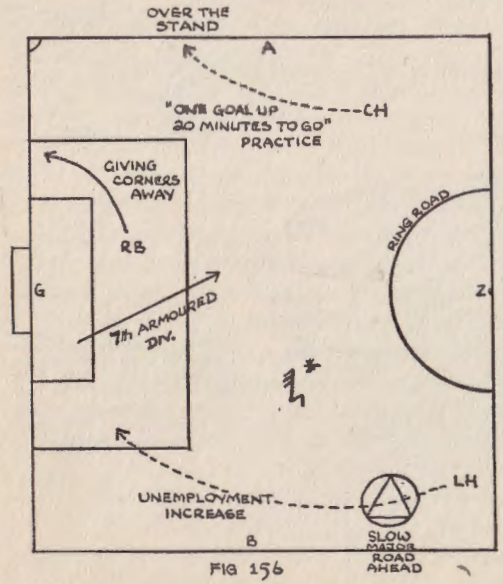
On the cover is seen a badly blurred and completely unrecognizable action photograph of a tense moment during one of the matches played by Frickley Colliery Girls' Hockey Team on their tour of Rockall. There seems no earthly reason why this picture should adorn the *Bulletin*, though it was possibly published as a sop to the Hockey Board, whose administrative affairs have long been the envy of the Football Association.

Hastily dismissing the girls, the reader is soon confronted by the editorial, written as usual by Viscount Glosham of Bog, the well-known bird watcher and Cup Final hand-shaker. He pursued his customary line, involving attacks on the Football League, amateur footballers in communist countries, the Press, and lenient referees, before ending with a reminder to all sportsmen to observe the age-old motto, 'Nil secundi ad infinitum pax 22 perform', which means 'It doesn't matter who wins the match so long as everyone turns up to play.'

Invigorated to a degree by Viscount Glosham's literary outburst, we next come to a feature of vital importance to everybody except those interested in football. It is headed simply, 'Soccer Strategy'.

Contributed by the manager of Gloggleton United, which holds the record for the number of times any club has applied for re-election, this article really takes the lid off the tactics of the game. There are hints of incalculable value, including one about kicking the ball on to the top deck of a passing trolleybus, when the home team are a goal ahead in the second half. There are, too, descriptions of eleven different methods of winning penalty kicks when undeserved. The writer of the article has obviously studied his subject diligently, progressing far beyond the routine ruse of diving into the penalty area and lying prone, after being tripped two yards outside.

To assist students of gamesmanship (*FA trans.*—strategy), a diagram is reproduced in the *Bulletin*, and the author has reproduced somewhere in this book a reproduction of the *Bulletin* reproduction.



The diagram (left) clearly shows the trend in football boot stud design and lace fibre structure fully described in Chapter 9

* This is a special code sign devised by the F.A. to indicate that the referee's ear trumpet has been struck by lightning

Another diagram which should help the author's non-readers, those who look at the pictures, is also reproduced somewhere. This diagram has an important bearing on the *Bulletin* article about the treatment of football injuries. The writer covers the entire range of cures from cold compresses to the more old-fashioned, yet nevertheless most effective, word-in-the-injured-player's-ear, 'Git on yer feet or yer ain't gitting no bonus.'

Letters to the editor are always a good bet, and in the *Bulletin* under review there are no fewer than five—all, oddly enough, written from the same address. They are reproduced here:

Dear Sir,

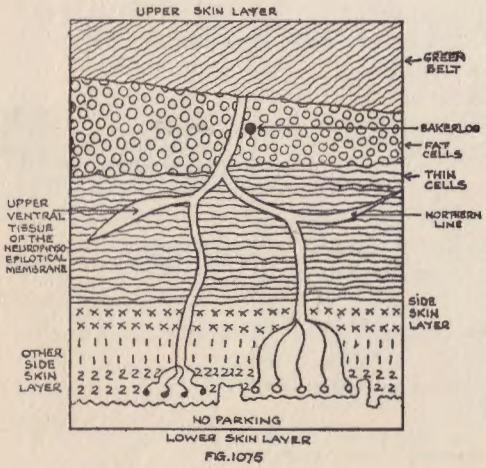
Would you be kind enough to inform me if it is at all possible to apply for a Cup Final ticket?

Signed, 'Hopeful',
Clapham Common.

Dear Sir,

Is it at all possible to apply for a Cup Final ticket?

Signed, 'Hopeful',
Clapham Common.



This diagram shows the action of cold compresses placed on the pelvis, just below the knee. A similar effect is obtained when the cartilage is removed from the left wrist

Dear Sir,

Where do I apply for a Cup Final ticket?

Signed, 'Hopeful',
Clapham Common.

Dear Sir,

What about a Cup Final ticket?

Signed, 'Hopeful',
Clapham Common.

Sir,

I do not want a Cup Final ticket.

Signed, 'Hopeless',
Clapham Common.

What else can the reader of the *FA Bulletin* expect for his half-a-crown? He cannot fail to be gripped by the article entitled, 'Punting a Pill in Peshawar' by Lt. Col. Puck R. Sarb, or the one by Thomas Tilling headed, 'Coaches—Old and New'.

The reader who appreciates the lighter touch will find ample humour in the four pages devoted to obituaries of club directors lately deceased, while the 'News from Around the World' feature is also frequently spiced with humour . . . albeit unintentionally.

This feature takes the form of a few lines contributed from all quarters of the globe: it is extremely useful to the FA themselves as a guide when arranging close-season tours. A few snippets are given here, just to provide readers, and non-readers, with the general picture:

GREENLAND: Nothing has been heard from this country this month, but, after all, snow news is good news.

RUSSIA: Pitches in Moscow are often covered with snow, when they are not covered with rain. The groundsmen use machines which sprinkle hot sand, the sand having the effect of soaking up the humidity. Other machines are then used to soak up the hot sand, leaving the pitches so dry that they have to be watered, after which

they are so wet, more hot sand has to be sprinkled and the entire process is repeated. Russian groundsmen have some pretty Volga things to say about this idea.

SEYCHELLES: The national soccer hero Moses Mweri was transferred from Chinkonkomini to Og Athletic for a record fee of ten shillings. (It should be mentioned that, in certain parts of the Seychelles, one shilling buys 10 fish, and one fish buys two women.)

CHILE: In the final of the Chilean Cup, Tierra del Tobago beat the famous Torrerio Matadorios by six goals to one, but could not receive the magnificent trophy as this had been spirited away by a spirited supporter of the Matadorios club. The thief took exception to the way the players of his club had been man-handled by the winning team. Torrerio Matadorios lost their centre-forward (broken leg), centre-half (broken leg and arm), right-back (stiletto wounds) and goalkeeper (Sten bullet lacerations).

AFGHANISTAN: An entirely new, and revolutionary, tactic in vogue this month is known as the Khyber pass. It is not used in the Himalayas, but in those mountains there is virtually no football because the country is too hillary.

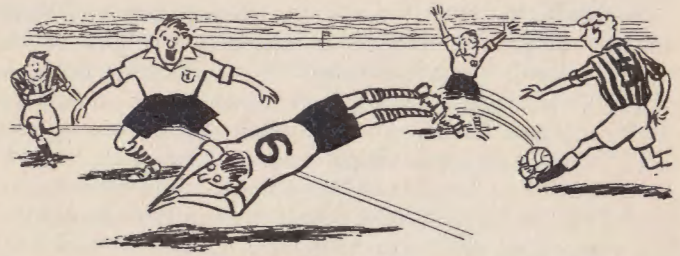
NORTHERN RHODESIA: A team will be sent next year to tour England. They will be known as the 'All Blacks', and will bring with them their own referee, a Scotsman with a black watch. They will be managed by a Grimsby refugee called Jakey Martin. Jakey will be the only tourist sporting footwear of any kind: he has a preference for Dover soles on his boots.

ITALY: Although Italy beat Sweden 10—0 in last month's international match, the victory did nothing to improve the supply of home soccer talent for future internationals. Included in the Italian team were three Swedes, known as 'bashers', two players from Tasmania, two from Wigan masquerading as Arabian Italians, three from Hong Kong who were very keen on spaghetti, and one outsider from Nepal, called a Nepoleon. The international board

are investigating the qualifications of at least 11 of the victorious side.

And so we come to the end of the August 1966 edition of the *FA Bulletin*. It is so packed with interesting material the editor could not find space to publish all the items that should have been included. Explaining the omissions, he inserted a note on the last page:

'The editor regrets that pressure on space compels him to hold over until the September issue, the article on "Smoke Abatement", written by John Player, and the description of the British shinty team's visit to Tibet.'



—the routine ruse of diving into the penalty area and lying prone, after being tripped two yards outside'

Chapter Twelve

The Popular Press
or
The Written Void

IN A PREVIOUS chapter we studied the effects on football of the peculiar styles of broadcasting favoured by the broadcasting fraternity, and it is now the turn of another common method of publicizing and commenting on football to get the 'treatment'. This method, or institution, or monster, has come to be known as the Popular Press, for no apparent reason.

Naturally the Press can cover a much wider field than radio, yet a careful study of newspaper articles on football over the past 80 years has revealed that all of them fall into the following well-defined groups, apart from those which do not fall into the following well-defined groups.

(*a*) **Match Reports.** Reports on matches often remind one of a child of three describing a Geiger counter, depending, of course, on the lack of skill of the reporter concerned. It is interesting, and highly enlightening, to read reports of the same match in half a dozen different papers. After the fifth report, you will start to wonder just which of the papers bothered to send a representative to this startingly confused game: after the sixth report, you will have the answer—none.

One irritating, though fortunately rare, feature of footballistic journalism is the printing error (known affectionately in the trade as 'a——literal'), an error for which the printer must take full blame. It can cause even more confusion than a report which does not contain a printing error, as a cursory glance at the following examples of this art will emphasize:

CHELSEA *v* ASTON VILLA

by Eugene Jones

'A large crowd saw Chelsea kick-off in bright sunshine. Early end-to-end exchanges favoured the visiting team, but both sets of forwards were erratic in front of goal and there was little excitement before half-time.'

H.T. Derby County 3; Wrexham 5

'Finney scored for Preston, following a clever move by Thompson, after 47 minutes. Villa saw several tense moments through successfully before proceeding to attack the home goalmouth, but their do-or-die rally made no impression on the Chelsea rearguard.'

Another common printing error is the omission of spacing between words which although causing the usual desired confusion, does also have the advantage of enabling the reader to finish his paper with time in hand before 12 o'clock opening. It looks like this:

'With only four minutes of the second half gone, Peabody got the ballandmovedintowardstheLeedsgoalAsthegoalkeeperadvancedPeabodyslippedtheballtoSmithwhoscoredwitha lowdrive.'

A very common printing error involves the subtle dropping of an entire line and, much to the reader's amazement, the insertion of the missing line in an article about Diana Dors 12 inches further down the page. Eyes down:

'Assembling all his sagging warriors who had taken such punishment from Walsall . . . but this policy merely left even bigger gaps for the goal-hungry Walsall forwards.'

Now, let us move swiftly 12 inches down the page and read:

'As the radiant Diana Dors sleepily tanned herself on the

beach at Colwyn Bay, wondering if a photographer might push her in, the Queen's Park Rangers' skipper decided his only chance was to plan an all-out attack, she told me of her plans to buy the British Film Industry and then open flour mills.'

Possibly the most annoying type of match report, though, is the one which seems to cover everything except the match itself. Considerably shortened it will read something like this:

STOKE CITY *v* PORT VALE

[by A. Potter]

'The match at Stoke this afternoon was somewhat marred by the weather, which persisted dull and overcast throughout the full 90 minutes. Continuous rain the previous night had turned the playing surface into a morass, and I seriously question whether the Football League should permit soccer to be played in such terrible conditions.

'Owing to the clash of colours, the visitors appeared in a new strip of black silk shirts and blue and white quartered shorts, the gift of a local businessman, who is in business locally.

'It was obvious from the opening whistle that the managers of both clubs were anxious about their club's positions in the League, and, of course, about their own positions with their clubs. An unusual incident occurred when a linesman accidentally tripped over his flag and was impaled on the railings, but none of the spectators were injured.

'An interesting, and highly skilful, display of marching and counter marching was given at half-time by the Gloggleton Motor Works Colliery Band, this being followed by a physical fitness display elegantly put on by the Etruria Young Women's League of Young Women (Etruria Branch). Stoke City won 6—0.'

(*b*) **Pre-Season Speculation.** All newspapers use the four weeks immediately preceding the opening of a new season for summing up the chances of the various teams in the forthcoming campaign. This is particularly distressing to cricket enthusiasts and, in fact, almost everyone else, apart from circulation managers guided by their slogan 'Cricket don't sell papers'.

The general points which emerge from this pre-season forecasting, year after year, are:

(1) Every team which finished in the top half of the League in the previous year will be largely left untouched by those whose job it is to touch teams.

(2) Every team which finished in the bottom half of the League in the previous year has been, like the war-time egg, completely reconstituted.

(3) Every relegated team has a new manager.

(4) Most of the teams not relegated have new managers.

(5) Every team has either a special secret plan, or some other equally revolutionary tactics, which they picked up in the close-season from Uruguay.

(6) All managers, while refusing to be unduly optimistic, are 'quietly confident of their lads' ability to win the League and Cup double'.

The writer of the article then concludes by forecasting which teams will finish top of their respective Leagues. Nine months later, cursing people's good memories, the writer is busily explaining why these same teams were all relegated. Oddly enough he never puts forward the likely explanation that he knows nothing about football.

(*c*) **Pen Pictures of Players.** A popular feature with small boys and old ladies and the players who have had their pens pictured. It is designed to prove that every footballer in the game is selflessly devoted to the game, his club, and his country; is assiduous and hard-working during training sessions; is deeply conscious of his duty to the public as an entertainer; has no thoughts of financial reward; and is quiet, shy, modest, and unassuming in his private life.

Sometimes these articles are so skilfully written, even the players themselves come to believe them.

(*d*) **Pools Forecasting.** Unlike match reporters, pools forecasters know nothing about football—and admit it. They are normally recruited from a roneoed list of retired grammar school mathematics masters, which is sent to all sports editors between June and July each season.

Pools are an intriguing facet of journalism, in which the writer takes two full columns on Thursday to prove that 14 particular matches must be home wins; and three full columns every Monday explaining that he really meant away wins all the time. After reading the latter apologies, one feels it is highly inconsiderate of the club's players to spoil the forecaster's weekend, just for the sake of a couple of points and bonus. The Pools, however, will be dealt with more fully in Chapter 13, as we don't want to get wet just yet.

(*e*) **Photographic Reproductions.** Little need be written about this subject, which covers action pictures of incidents occurring during the game, because everyone must be familiar with the typical shapeless blur, booting an invisible football past an equally shapeless blur, standing between what appears to be two telegraph poles about 18 inches apart. Captions usually read, 'Tense moment in a top-of-the-table tussle as Charlie Chumley (Gloggleton United) fires in a scorching shot, only yards wide of the upright.'

Pictures taken under floodlight are even better. They look exactly the same, except for a string of what appear to be pearls along the top of the photograph, and a bright splodge in the centre which obliterates even the invisible ball.

Backroom Boys of the Press. Some mention was made earlier of that peculiar species of journalist, the circulation manager, and it would be unfair to minimize in any way the important role played by these CM's in getting a completely comprehensive coverage of football in

the Popular Press. They know what you should want to read, and they make sure you read it . . . whether you like it or not.

The trend nowadays is towards tighter and tighter editionizing, which means roughly the production of anything up to forty different newspapers, all with the same name, where five would do adequately.

Take for example the average CM's dream of his ideal edition for Seaham Harbour. It would include a 1,000 word report about Seaham Harbour Albion's first team match, with large pictures, 500 words on Seaham Harbour Albion Reserves, 200 words on Seaham Harbour Albion 3rd team, and if Seaham Harbour Albion have any other teams engaged on that particular day, appropriate space for all of them.

The rest of the matches reported would have to include the exploits of every team within five miles of the centre of Seaham Harbour, every junior team in the same radius, and every schoolboys' team in that area.

There would be feature articles by the Seaham Harbour Albion chairman, the manager, and at least four other members of the side (all six articles being written, of course, by one man who is neither chairman, manager, nor player, but merely a prostituted writer).

By this time every inch of space has been used up, which means there is no room for the star columnist's story of three players at Workington being stoned to death by spectators, or the gossip writer's exclusive tip-off that a certain international forward would be transferred from Lynton and Lynmouth to Plymouth Argyle for £90,000 within 24 hours. The stock retort of the circulation manager when questioned about this is always the same, 'People in Seaham Harbour couldn't care less about what happens in Workington or Plymouth.'

That also explains the absence of any reports of Sunderland or Middlesbrough matches in this specimen Seaham Harbour edition. After all, Sunderland is 8 miles from

Seaham Harbour, and our CM has his finger so closely on the public pulse, he knows Seahamsiders are not interested in Wearsiders . . . or if they are, they shouldn't be.

How to Write Football. Contrary to general belief, there is no apprenticeship, and, in fact, no accepted normal method of entry for the budding football writer who wants to get a job in the Popular Press. He should never write to the editor stating his qualifications: neither should he ask to see the sports editor, and, above all, he must never produce well-written, informative samples of his work which might be used as evidence of his writing prowess or football knowledge.

The easiest method of entry is by being heard commentating on TV soccer, while the wife of a director of the newspaper is tuned in.

Another excellent ruse is to make a complete hash of your work as a film critic, political commentator, crime reporter, or gardening expert, following which depressing series of failures, you are bound to be passed on to the sports editor . . . the only department head through whose hands you have not passed.

There are other methods of entering football journalism, although we can think of only one which is absolutely foolproof. Learn how to play football professionally, and the soccer gates of Fleet Street will be opened wide to receive, and acclaim you.

Summing-up. The suggested cure for all the foregoing is for every football journalist to follow a happy example previously mentioned and become happily extinct.

NOTE TO ALL READERS.—Try reading the next chapter backwards. It might be easier to understand that way.

Chapter Thirteen

Football Pools *or* Splash!

THE FOOTBALL POOLS are such a well-known institution (even though regarded in some quarters as not quite wholly admirable), that little need be said about their organization or set-up. For details of this, the Golden Treasury of Longer Epic Poems will not be found invaluable.

This chapter has been written more with the object of helping the poor and needy fulfil their lifelong dream to win £75,000—and to enable them to repeat that feat at least once in every soccer season. It is to be hoped that, as a result of studying this chapter, nobody will become poorer or needier.

What to do. The basic essential for football-pool success is to be able to forecast correctly the results of matches before they are played. For the purpose of the Pools, all matches must end in one of three ways.

(*a*) When the home team scores more goals than the away team. Home Win marked 1.

(*b*) When the away team scores more goals than the home team. Away Win marked 2.

(*c*) When both teams score as many goals as each other, or score no goals at all, whether home or away. Draw, marked X, except when it's marked 0.

It is interesting to speculate about what would happen should a match end other than in these three accepted ways.

Making it difficult. In order to make the whole sorry business more difficult, certain methods of procedure have been forbidden. These include filling in the coupons after the games have been played, as this tends to give a fairly reliable guide to form.

Again, in a pool in which you are required to forecast,

say, four aways, a single line containing twelve or fourteen selections will not be accepted, even though you have a much better chance of getting four of them right that way.

Thirdly, it is forbidden to attempt to influence the results of certain matches by bribing the referee, shooting the goalkeeper or any other ruses which may seem, on the surface, harmless enough. In this connexion, players are forbidden to enter for the Pools because, as the FA so rightly insist, a player might be tempted to influence the result of a game in which he plays . . . in order to secure for himself a winning line on his coupon. He would need to influence, in this way, only eight matches on any Saturday afternoon to have a winning line on the Treble Chance Pool—providing the other 168 players involved were prepared to help with their influence.

It may, thus, be seen that the permitted ways of filling in coupons are strictly limited, which leads us ever so gently on to the next section.

Methods and Means

(1) *Lucky Dip*. If you are looking for, say, 10 home winners, put the names of all teams playing into a hat (having first written them down on a piece of paper, of course), and pick out 10. Mark these 10 on your coupon, and anticipate a big surprise at results obtained by this method. If you find difficulty in picking ten, you probably have a hole in your hat.

(2) *Newspaper Guides*. Every daily and weekly newspaper gives a guide to the Pools, and the forecast suggestions given therein can be copied *verbatim* (*Germ. trans.*—'in toto') if desired. A chancy method, this invariably yields poor results and no dividends.

(3) *Pins and Needles*. Very similar to the Lucky Dip method, but slightly more entertaining to onlookers. If looking for eight draws, place the coupon on the table, pick up a pin, close your eyes, and stab. The match nearest the point receiving the wound will be one of your selections.

Care must be taken not to stab the wife, or the cat (which reminds one of a joke about ball-bearings, but it is quite irrelevant).

It is useless to select as a draw, 'P/O Serial Number', even though the pin, or needle, may indicate such a selection. It is common knowledge that P/O Serial Number have not competed in the Football League for many years although they still appear on most coupons.

(4) *Sequences*. Based on previous years' results of the corresponding match, using a sort of 'horses for courses' theory. If, for instance, Reading have won at Walsall every time in the last 75 years, it is assumed they have established a monopoly (see Government White Paper on restriction of same, unless a Chelsea supporter, when see Blue and White Paper). This match is an obvious away win. If Walsall have other ideas it is a little inconvenient for everyone—except Walsall, of course.

It must be admitted that the only people who have made a fortune out of this method are the fellows who closet themselves away throughout the year and compile books showing results for the past 75 years. These books are then sold as photostats to Pools tipsters or photostatisticians.

(5) *Form*. (*Note*.—This has nothing to do with Miss Sabrina.) A variation on sequences, except that, instead of worrying about previous years, it is the club's performances in the preceding weeks which are taken into account. Form can be inverted or, on the other hand, verted, and, as Miss Sabrina would undoubtedly object to such treatment, this obviously has nothing to do with her, as the author warned in his sub-heading. Inverted form is based on the Law of Averages. (See the Coconut Desiccator's Guide to Common Law.) If Hull City have won their last seven games by 5—1, the law of averages suggests that it is about time Hull City lost 5—1. This law occasionally works—as the people who closet themselves away will testify.

Verted form is not quite so simple, being based on the Law of Continuous Progression (see any Arithmetic book).

Taking our previous example again, the student of this law reasons that, if Hull City have won their last seven games by 5—1, there is no earthly reason to suppose they cannot win their next game by the same margin. By employing arguments in favour of inverted form and verted form, our Pools tipster is always able to have an each-way bet in a two horse race.

(NOTE.—In the game in question, Hull City drew, the score being 3—3.)

Students of form, apart from the followers of the fore-mentioned Miss Sabrina, usually stick rigidly to either inverted form or verted form, as experts will never advise mixing the two. Once you try mixing, you will probably find that the matches you have chosen to invert (or vert) have verted (or inverted) or vice-versa.

(6) *Dreams*. A stroke of luck which may happen only once in a lifetime, although it may not. You retire to bed one night, full of hope, camembert, and cocoa, and dream of a correct line in the Penny Points Pool for the following week. You can then make a list of the line—you will obviously have taken pen and coupon to bed with you—and start dreaming about what you will do with the money you are going to get.

There is only one snag to bear in mind. Some dreams operate in reverse, so it is possible that the matches you dream as home (or away) wins, may turn out to be away (or home) wins, or vice versa. Or they might be draws. It is even possible that some dream results may be reversed, while others are not reversed, thus indicating that dreams, like form, can invert or vert.

If you do dream up a correct line, therefore, you should consult an astrologer for guidance and correct interpretation, as you may easily go mad trying to work it all out for yourself.

(7) *Permutations and Constellations*. This is a purely scientific approach to the Pools, calculated to reduce the risk of success to a minimum—providing you submit a sufficient

number of entries. A permutation is an entry in which the matches are designated by their correct symbols, *i.e.* 1 = home win; 2 = away win; X or 0 = draw; H = Haven't a clue; etc.

In a constellation, the appropriate matches are indicated by stars and curves. (It must once again be emphasized that this has nothing to do with Miss Sabrina, which is a great pity.)

A permutation or constellation is a specified method of filling in a specified pool by taking a specified number of matches, and permuting or constellating, them in a specified way, in a specified number of lines, to give a specified chance of obtaining a winning line. The whole operation, therefore, could be described as specific.

All these explanations, though necessary, may, or may not, be simpler to follow if examples are shown. Remember that the keynote is simplicity, and that all instructions on a coupon should be clear and easy to understand.

EXAMPLE 'A' (PERMUTATION)

THE FOUR AWAYS POOL

Matches selected				*Instructions*
Tottenham	*v* Everton	2	A	Perm. any two matches from any one group, with any one match from any two groups, or all four groups if applicable.
Chelsea	*v* Blackpool	2		
Luton Town	*v* Leeds U	2	B	
Rotherham	*v* Stoke C	2		
Aldershot	*v* Norwich	2	C	23½ lines at 3*d* a line = 1/11½*d* staked.
Halifax	*v* Crewe A.	2		
Gloggleton U	*v* Chester	2	D	
York City	*v* Thirsk	2		

EXAMPLE 'B' (PERMUTATION)

PENNY POINTS POOL

Match No.	*Forecast*	*Instructions*
1	1 X 2	Perm. any four lines of six with any other six lines of four; where two lines are adjacent, perm. two sections in block Y X Z, adding the last sub-group when required.
2	X 2 1	
3	2 X 1	
4	1 X 2	
5	X 2 1	
6	2 X 1	
7	1 2 X	3,594 lines at 1*d* a line = approx. £22. X. 1*d* staked.
8	1 2 X	
9	1 2 X	
10	1 2 X	
11	1 2 X	
12	2 X 1	
13	H H H	

EXAMPLE 'C' (CONSTELLATION)

THE TWELVE RESULTS POOL

Match No.	*Forecast*	*Instructions*
1	*	
2	*	
3	*	
4	*	Perm. everything. Thousands of lines at 1*d* = 4/6*d* staked (as recommended by John Rock in the Gloggleton Free Press).
5	*	
6	*	
7	*	
8	*	
9	*	
10	*	
11	*	
12	*	

As pools promoters are very harassed gentlemen, and the shore-to-ship telephones on their yachts cruising between Bermuda and Liverpool are constantly in use, pools punters should not complicate the issue by using permutations or constellations which are at all involved.

For example, the following entry might not be acceptable, as it is not entirely clear.

EXAMPLE 'D' (CONGLOMERATION)

THREE DRAWS POOL

Matches			*Forecast*	*Instructions*
Charlton A	*v*	Aston Villa	X	Perm. any two matches from any six groups of five, knit two together, take away the number you first thought of, and double it—unless Good Friday falls on Sheffield Wednesday. Two lines at 3*d* = 5½*d* staked (½*d* discount for cash on delivery).
Manchester C	*v*	Manchester U	X	
Ipswich T	*v*	Plymouth A	X	
Banbury	*v*	Bigbury	X	
Dinsdale Utd	*v*	Barnsley	X	
Q.P.R.	*v*	P.N.E.	X	
Rochdale	*v*	Rotherham	X	
East Ham	*v*	West Ham	X	
North Ham	*v*	South Ham	X	

At this stage the author feels some mention should be made of the tit-bit of practically all Pools coupons—the Treble Chance. This pool is named the Treble Chance, not because the punter always has three chances of winning, but because he has practically no chance at all. That may seem logical to the individual who christened it, although it does not make sense to anyone else.

The Treble Chance is popular for one very good reason: the dividends which accrue from it are usually the highest on any pool, although they so seldom accrue for the right punters—us—it hardly seems worth bothering with. It is, however, only human nature for the majority of investors to spurn the insignificant £12,000 of the Penny Points in order to concentrate on the big prizes of the Treble Chance.

Void coupons are frequently found on the Treble Chance pool, because unlike all other pools in the Pools, the drawn match on the Treble Chance must bear the symbol o instead of X. This has been done for no other reason we can think of except to rob aborigines of £75,000 after they have made eight correct selections.

It has been suggested by the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Desiccated Coconut Importers that this chapter should conclude with a list of arguments against participation in the Pools by punters. This is being acted upon so as to discourage any future Pools-participation-punters.

(1) Filling in Pools is morally degrading, unless you win.

(2) You are liable to lose a large amount of money, unless you win.

(3) You are helping the Pools promoters to become stinkingly rich, unless you win.

(4) You will become bad-tempered, morose, start drinking heavily, and probably beat your wife, unless you win.

(5) You will find that when someone else wins the Treble Chance they will get £75,000, but when you win it the dividend will be exactly 22/–.

(6) If you do win £75,000, you will be so shocked by the news that you will have a stroke and spend the rest of your life in a gold-and-diamond-studded invalid chair, playing marbles with miners.[1]

[1] All permutations used in this chapter are copyright and may not be reproduced without written permission from the Football Association and Football League.

Chapter Fourteen

In a Transfer Market—1966

GLOGGLETON UNITED had reached a crisis in their history—not for the first time, let it be mentioned—but there was no doubt that the old club were up against it. The team, as constituted, were just not good enough. Out of 35 matches played, 34 had been lost, and the other one drawn—when the opposing team, Whipps Cross Wanderers, had fielded 11 amateurs as a result of a players' strike.

Not surprisingly, the most important item on the agenda of the weekly board meeting concerned ways and means of strengthening the side, and that famous soccer sage, chairman Mr Austin Morris, used all his powers of oratory to press home his own point of view on this matter.

'Gloggleton's biggest problem, gentlemen, is the forward line. Allow me to remind you that in 35 games played this season, only four goals have been scored. Two were scored by a Rochdale full-back, who accidentally put the ball in his own goal: the other two were scored, also accidentally I imagine, by our own full-back from penalty kicks.

'We have tried all the normal remedies for this spasm of goal-shyness; all have failed. I passed on your advice about centre-forward Charlie Chumley needing more dynamite in his boots, but, apart from not really curing our headache, the experiment proved much too costly. The trainer managed to insert four sticks of gelignite into Chumley's boots before the start of our last away match. What happened? The first time he shot at goal, he killed four of our own forwards and a precocious photographer. In addition no fewer than 18 spectators behind the goal were taken to hospital, causing them to miss at least two games—a fact which inspired the chairman of the home club to send

me a bill for thirty-six shillings, compensation for lost receipts.

'I trust, gentlemen', he said looking directly at his vice-chairman Mr Herbert Pane, 'that you will remember which director advised us to use dynamite when his name comes up for re-election to the board at the annual shareholders' meeting.'

Eleven pairs of eyes, in other words 22 single eyes, shifted slowly, yet penetratingly towards Pane the culprit who, determined not to capitulate without a struggle, jumped to his feet to tell the meeting:

'This is no time for petty domestic squabbling. This is the moment for action, and I can give you that action by signing a new centre-forward. I know just the man we need, Willie Waterhouse of Wirral Wanderers. I say him playing a storming game in the traditional match at Highbury between Old England and Young Directors, and I am sure he could be had for less than £5,000.'

Austin Morris interrupted, 'Are you sure we're not the ones who would be had? I shall want to know a lot more about Willie Waterhouse before I vote for his transfer.

'They're the two new stars the directors signed on'

What sort of style, for instance, does he favour? Is he unorthodox?'

Pane answered, 'It would be a big mistake to bring religion into this. As far as I am concerned he is a wonderful marksman, in fact he has already scored 22 games for England in 20 goals, and in three of those goals, no ball was used.'

He was invited to explain such an involved state of affairs and he said, 'When I asked Waterhouse to explain the virtue of scoring without the ball, he told me that any fool could score with the ball.'

'This player sounds too intelligent for Gloggleton', said the doubting Morris. 'He might want reasonable wages and, worse still, could incite the other players to demand more than the £7 a week they're being paid now.'

For once, however, the Gloggleton chairman was outvoted and the board bravely decided to make a bid for the transfer, from Wirral Wanderers, of Willie Waterhouse. (Transfer deals are so terribly involved, and fraught with hazard for all parties except the club selling the player, that the author thinks it might be a good idea to take readers behind the scenes in this Waterhouse deal.) We are now behind the scenes. . . .

Wirral Wanderers wanted £7,000 for Waterhouse—so they asked for £20,000. Gloggleton United knew Waterhouse was worth £10,000—so they offered £4,000. This figure may seem far removed from the £20,000 put on his head, but there were some knowing folk who said even £4,000 was about £5,000 more than Waterhouse was worth.

The deal went through, and on the following morning, the Popular, or National, Press—as usual, struggling for any sort of a story with which to lead their back pages—gave it the headline treatment. Unfortunately none of the papers could agree on the actual transfer fee involved. Here are a few examples:

News Crocodile— £8,000 *Daily Heron* £9,000
Daily Mariner—£14,000 *Daily Female*—£11,000

As is customary, though, the *Daily Distress* outbid all the other newspapers and announced exclusively to its readers that Willie Waterhouse had been transferred for £20,010—adding the odd £10 to prove, no doubt, that, like the readers of this chapter, the *Daily Distress* man had been on the inside of the deal.

So much wild conjecture about the size of the fee brought the inevitable 'official' story from the 'local man', an elderly scribe who wrote under the pseudonym of 'Brontosaurus' in the Gloggleton *Free Press*. 'Brontosaurus', whose real name was Ben Bean, wrote: 'In order to settle all the doubts and wild guesses now circulating in other less reliable journals, I am at liberty to reveal—without any guesswork—that the transfer fee paid to Wirral for Waterhouse's transfer, was between £5,000 and £25,000.'

That masterpiece of journalism, which literally shrieked of authenticity, was added to in the next issue, when 'Brontosaurus' wrote:

'Further to my official revelation of the size of the Waterhouse transfer fee, I can now also disclose that this was no straight transfer negotiation.' (He was on safe ground there, because the next straight transfer will be the first one.) However let Ben Bean, who you may remember, is 'Brontosaurus', continue.

'In addition to the fee I mentioned yesterday, Wirral will be paid an additional £50 after Waterhouse has played 42 matches in the Gloggleton first XI.'

This information was received in the town with some scepticism, because readers of the Gloggleton *Free Press*, who had endured the pedestrian drivelling of 'Brontosaurus' for more than fifty years, refused to believe that, for once, he had managed to get hold of a story . . . and a true one at that.

They were being less than fair to the 'local man', as was

proved later in the season when Willie Waterhouse, having played eleven games without scoring a goal, was dropped into the reserve side. He was forced to accept reserve team status for the rest of his playing career, despite pleading telegrams sent regularly every month from Wirral to Gloggleton asking, 'When are you going to give Waterhouse his 42nd game in the first team?'

Realizing eventually that Wirral would never forget that £50 for 42 games agreement, the directors of Gloggleton reluctantly decided that Waterhouse had played his last game for them as a first team player. He scored an average of 85 goals every season for the second XI, before age caught up with him, and he was offered the alternative of a pension of fourteen shillings a week, or the job of Gloggleton manager. He plumped for the pension.

The heartbreaking tale of the transfer of Willie Waterhouse provides the most bitter indictment of the 1966 transfer system. His pathetic figure will be seen shuffling along to the official entrance at Muck Park for the rest of his life: Willie will never miss a match, and he will be permitted to enter the ground without going through the turnstiles. He is certain to appreciate this generous gesture of his former employers, even though they do deduct two shillings weekly from his pension to cover the cost of his soccer entertainment.

Willie Waterhouse will have only one problem on his mind, and it will live with him forever. He is going to try to discover why he was never allowed more than 41 games in the first team of Gloggleton United Football Club. Perhaps it would be kinder not to tell him.

Chapter Fifteen

The Close-Season
or
'Phew! Isn't it Hot?'

SOMEWHERE AROUND the end of April, after all the fuss and bother of promotion and regurgitation has died down, there are three months of the year when no football is played, except among the Scots who, with no other opponents available, presumably arrange friendly matches against their friends the Picts. In the good old days when the English summer was characterized by a certain amount of sunshine, this period was called the close-season.

No doubt the foreign visitor, if he hasn't gone back home in disgust by now, will wonder what happens to all the myriad folk connected with football during this lay-off. In an attempt to find the answer to this poser we sent out, last summer, a team of incompetent investigators to tour the country interviewing as many people as they could find who spoke English.

They returned with a vast amount of information, most of which was useless, and all of which was burned: that is why our thanks are due to the proprietors of the Gloggleton *Free Press* for allowing us to gather our statistics from back issues of their newspaper. (We are indebted to the Gloggleton Fish Fryers Ltd., for their co-operation in this matter.)

The Players. No fewer than 38·72 per cent of the players spend the close-season in hospital recovering from their activities of the previous season. Most of the remainder go on holiday; First Division players to Switzerland, Second Division players to Scotland, and their Third Division brethren to Southend.

There are rumours, although these have never been

substantiated, that a few players use the summer break to redeem themselves in the eyes of their neighbours, and do some honest work.

Managers. The few who retain their posts for the following season have a busy time issuing statements to the Press, the public, the players, and anybody else who cares to listen to managers in the close season. Those not retained frequently suffer from writer's cramp after signing on at the Labour Exchange, or from pneumonia after waiting in draughty corridors for interviews with directors of non-League clubs. A mere handful, 4·28 per cent, emigrate to Tibet or become bus conductors.

Directors. When not engaged in either dismissing or engaging managers, 99·98 per cent do exactly the same as they do for the rest of the year . . . nothing. The remaining 0·02 per cent die from old age or alcoholic poisoning.

Referees. With bitter memories of the previous season behind them, they are actively engaged making themselves unrecognizable to the public by growing false beards or moustaches, or changing their names to Smith or Jones—unless their names happen to be Smith or Jones. One referee—again, this is rumour—is reported to have spent his close-season at an FA coaching centre trying to learn something about football. He was struck off the list when this news leaked out.

'But it still won't prove whether it was a penalty or not'

Linesmen. Linesmen have a very easy and profitable time in the close season as their consummate flag-wagging skill is utilized most successfully by British Railways, who, in addition to overcoming the shortage of guards, also surmount the problems of the shortage of flags. (Linesmen always bring their own equipment—*i.e.* flags—with them.)

Many linesmen find that the volume of abuse to which they are subjected by irate railway users is far less than that normally encountered around the soccer terracing: once having discovered this, they stay with the railways. Eventually they reach a ripe old age, and retire on the exceedingly generous railway pension—neither of which events would have taken place had they remained linesmen.

The Pools. A few years ago, faced with a colossal loss of revenue during the summer months, the Pools bosses threw away their cigars, downed their last couple of brandies and soda, rolled up their diamond-studded shirt sleeves, and went racing all over the country in their Daimlers looking for work, but not looking too hard.

Just when it seemed their only solution would be to utilize those same Daimlers for plying a car-hire trade, an enterprising young gentleman from Winalot Pools dashed over to Australia and persuaded all sorts of people to start playing football there. He then dashed back to Liverpool and started up his Pools again, using the Australian matches. Fired by this enthusiastic example, another bright young spark from the rival firm of Loosalot Pools invented horse racing and ran his coupons on the performances of the jockeys.

Radio Commentators. As soon as the last match of the season is over, the gentlemen of this fraternity breathe a great sigh of relief and eagerly start contemplating three months' cricket commentating and reading the weather forecast.

Reporters. The boys in Fleet Street spend the first six weeks of the close-season on tour with the England team, accepting quite unashamedly the well-known lavish FA

hospitality, while surreptitiously making frequent excursions to the cable office for the purpose of sending home vitriolic comments on the tourists' performances and behaviour.

On returning from their trip, they repeatedly tell the public that last season was the worst ever. They then fly to Majorca for a month's holiday on what remains of the currency supplied by their employers for the England tour, returning to England just in time to tell their readers that next season will be even worse than last.

Press Photographers. Spending summer with a Press photographer has all the ingredients of a busman's holiday. They practise assiduously on the beaches of all the more popular resorts, while at night their dreams centre on the bigger and better blurs they will produce next season.

Spectators. This huge body of sportsmen, and members of supporters' clubs, go their separate ways with fond farewells ringing in their ears, and that depressing, despondent reminder, 'See you again next season, I suppose?' Questioned as to what they did on a summer Saturday afternoon, 100 spectators produced answers which were, to say the least, quite startling. Out of the 100:

4 went to cricket matches.
7 also went to sleep for the afternoon.
3 did odd jobs for the wife.
6 went to the pictures so as not to do odd jobs for the wife.
2 tried to navigate the Suez Canal on a raft. (Both supported teams which finished at the bottom of the League.)
34 worked overtime, so as not to do odd jobs for the wife.
17 emigrated to Russia.
6 refused to answer, except in the presence of a solicitor.
4 couldn't remember.
2 said nothing, but blushed noticeably.
14 bought television sets.
1 (The author), admitted that he spent his time writing silly books.

Chapter Sixteen

Team Tactics Talk—1966

THE ACTION—if any—takes place in the dressing-room of Gloggleton United Football Club, about one hour before the important championship match against Rochdale, one of the leading clubs in . . . Rochdale. It is time for the briefing, time for plans and tactics to be discussed, and the formulator of what he hopes will prove match-winning plans is Mr Austin Morris, the chairman. It should be pointed out that the man normally in charge of tactics is the manager, but on this occasion, he was away on a scouting mission—with orders not to return until he could rub two fires together and make a stick.

Mr Morris opens up, 'Now look here, lads. You've got to give 'em the clog today. I want you to hit the ball high into the air, and follow it up. And, when you're playing against the wind, never forget to make all your ground passes in the air. You must mark your opponents very carefully: that's why I've asked the trainer to issue each of you with a copying ink pencil.' Turning to Sam Stopper, the centre-half, Mr Morris whispered, 'I'm arranging for you to have two pencils, Sam, because I happen to know this Accrington centre-forward is a dangerous customer, and he must be marked even more thoroughly than the rest of the team.'

There followed a long discussion about the remarkable shooting ability and prowess with the ball, of the Accrington danger man—interrupted eventually by Sam Stopper who told his chairman, 'Thanks for the warning, but we're not playing Accrington today, I'm more concerned about the Rochdale centre-forward.' Stopper's reward for having the courage to say what his team mates had been thinking all along, was suspension—*sine die*.

The summary sacking of Stopper provided Charlie Chumley, Gloggleton's centre-forward, with just the excuse he needed to make his thirty-fourth request for a transfer. 'Mr Morris', said Chumley, 'I'm not standing for any more of this treatment. I insist on being put on the transfer list.'

He was asked, 'What reason have you got this time?'

'I don't like the way you treat your players, and even more important, my wife doesn't get on at all well with the woman who lives next door to us.'

Morris looked at Charlie the serf as if he had taken leave of his senses. 'But that's ridiculous. You live in the next house to me.'

'That's just the point. My wife can't stand the sight of your wife.'

'Well, we can soon smooth that out. I'll arrange to move to the other end of town if that will keep you happy, son.'

'No, my mind is made up. I've been approached by North Ham Wanderers, and they've offered me £15 a week, with a spare-time job on the side worth another £15, a fully furnished house, and a confectionery business for my brother Cyril.'

There was nothing Austin Morris could do about matching such an offer, but he pleaded with Charlie, 'Whatever

'Whose idea was it to get a director to kick off—that's the fourth time he's missed it'

you do, don't tell our manager what you've been offered. If you do he'll move to North Ham himself, and put you in his job here.'

The tactical talk ended in confusion—as is customary. The team left the dressing-room and entered the tunnel leading to the field of play—pausing on the way to light up their cigarettes, pipes and cigars. This was done because all the players liked to abide by club rules, and those rules stated that there must be no smoking in the dressing-room; consequently players had to wait until they got on the field before lighting up.

The sight of eleven footballers lining up for the kick-off smoking their cigarettes, pipes, and cigars was also a sound strategical dodge, demoralizing, as it did, many opposing teams before the game had even started. In addition, centre-forward Charlie Chumley, who enjoyed smoking a particularly thick shag in his large briar pipe, frequently managed to run through the opposition defence on a smoke screen and score a quick goal before anyone saw him.

Every good scheme, though, has its disadvantages. For instance, Gloggleton's Turkish goalkeeper, Mustapha Katch, was sometimes inconvenienced when over-keen forwards headed his hookah out of his hands, and the club outside-right, a chain-smoker, nicknamed 'Lucky' Strike, often lost possession of the ball as he tripped over the chains he had been smoking.

After a comparatively close game, Rochdale beat Gloggleton, 11—2, a result which pleased the Gloggleton players almost as much as it did Rochdale, so they felt entitled to be despondent when assaulted by their chairman, Mr Morris, at the after-match inquest.

He raved at the players, 'I told you to use the long ball. What did you do? You used the short ball. I said we must try the square ball, yet I saw with my own eyes—and so did my wife—that the one you played with was quite round. And what have you to say about my instructions to use the open space?'

'Lucky' Strike could not resist the temptation: 'The only open spaces I know are the ones between your two ears, Mr Chairman.' He was suspended *sine die*.

Austin Morris, perhaps feeling some remorse of conscience, ended his talk with a generous word of praise, 'I wish you would all do as well as right-half Steven Sinus. He plays a blinder every week.'

Yet even that kind word was in the nature of a back-handed compliment. Steven Sinus could not see more than twelve inches in front of his one good eye: in the circumstances, he was entitled to play a blinder—every week.

Anticipated Newspaper Comments on this Book

Morning Moron—This book (?)

News of the Earth—Ugh!

Evening Drivel—An outstanding contribution to literature, I think.

Noon Natter—No wastepaper basket should be without it.

FA Bulletin—Shackleton ought to be prosecuted.

Daily Telephone—This is one that WON'T get the Nobel Prize for literature.

Peking Courier—司登美亞切商取更詳細之說明書。

Epilogue

IF ANY person, other than a relative of the author or his collaborator, should discover in this book any piece, passage, or paragraph, which tends to suggest that the author or his collaborator may be sane after all, it would be greatly appreciated if he would notify the publishers, in writing. The written confirmation and signature of two reliable witnesses is essential if the publisher is to have any hope of influencing the authorities of the institution at which the author and his collaborator are detained.

THE END (*Eng. trans.*—No more epilogues).